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Cambrian

SUPERSTITIONS,

COMPRISING

GHOSTS, OMENS, WITCHCRAFT, TRADITIONS, &c.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED

A CONCISE VIEW OF THE MANNERS AND CUSTOMS

OF THE

PRINCIPALITY,

AND SOME

FUGITIVE PIECES.

BY W. HOWELLS.

" Fairy Tale to lull the Heir,
" Goblins grim the Maids to scare."
SIR W. SCOTT.
" Black Spirits and white, red Spirits and grey."

TIPTON:
PRINTED BY THOMAS DANKS,
PUBLISHED & SOLD BY LONGMAN & CO. LONDON.
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TO THE

RIGHT HON. EARL CAWDOR,

THIS WORK

IS

WITH FEELINGS

OF THE MOST PROFOUND RESPECT

AND ADMIRATION,

Dedicated

BY HIS LORDSHIP'S MOST OBEDIENT AND DEVOTED

HUMBLE SERVANT,

WILLIAM HOWELLS.

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PREFACE.

My inducement for presenting to the public these tales of "by-gone days," was the advertisement of the very Rev. Archdeacon Beynon, which appeared in the Carmarthen Journal, of *May* 21, 1830, proposing a reward of twenty guineas, with a medal value three guineas, for the *best printed* English Essay, 8vo. containing 500 pages, on the Superstitions, Ghosts, Legends, &c. of *all parts* of the Principality, to be delivered *before Feb* 3, 1831. Now when the limited period proposed for the collection of 500 pages of matter, and the above little adjective *all* is considered, it must appear obvious that such an Herculean labour is not capable of being accomplished by *one* individual at least. Imagining it therefore to be a matter of impossibility to perform what the very reverend gentleman requires, I cannot consistently with propriety offer myself as a candidate, but will say, "Palmam qui meruit ferat."

I have had considerable trouble to collect the stories which appear in the work, being also two years from attaining my majority, and having so short a period to collect them, as the book is has-

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tily ushered before a discerning public, I trust they will overlook any imperfections which may appear.

It is an apophthegm that stories increase by narration, but I have not exaggerated mine; they are as pure and unsophisticated as I received them, —none are the dreams of my imagination, nor is there any thing spurious foisted on the reader.

As to the poetical portion, I hope my readers will make an allowance for the imperfections of the pieces, as most of them were written when I was 18 years of age. They have all appeared before in print.

I return my sincere thanks, and feel extremely grateful to those friends who have given their names as Subscribers; to the Rev. J. Griffiths, of Cilia, to whom I am indebted for much valuable information respecting fairies; and particularly to the noble Earl who so kindly permitted me to dedicate this to him; and in conclusion must say, that "There remains behind, not only an abundant harvest, but labourers capable of gathering it in."

W. HOWELLS.

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CAMBRIAN SUPERSTITIONS,

&c.

WHEN we take a retrospective view of the customs and superstitions of our forefathers, in days *o' lang syne*, and look at the present enlightened generation, it is with feelings of exultation and joy we reflect, that the dark ages when the wicker basket, with its victim, was brought forth to be immolated, and were heard the agonizing shrieks of the dying sufferer, mingling in awful concert with the demoniac joy of the barbarous and ignorant by-standers,—rending as it were the very skies with their clamour,—have past away like a dream; "All's over with that generation long since," and we rejoice that the beatific rays of Wisdom, have gleamed through the dark clouds of Ignorance and Superstition, for "Tempora mutantur et nos mutamur in illis," and the *march of Intellect*, has made its welcome appearance amongst hills and dales, moors and marshes, *even* amongst the mountains and valleys of Wales. Almost every peasant can *now* read, and no longer dreads passing over his thresh-

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old in the dark, for fear of coming in contact with the "shad'wy shapes" of "the world unknown",* resorts to spells to procure fair weather, or augurs future events from *omens*,—instead of *this* he trusts in an all-wise and beneficent Providence; and it is an incontrovertible fact, that what our ancestors credited to be as *true* as their own existence, is now *generally* regarded as "the idle wind", or as an empty dream, for "Phantoms with all their dim array" have disappeared before the beams of Knowledge, like dew before the glorious orb of day.

It is true that relics of superstition "*here* a little and *there* a little" remain; but they are like a little snow congregated into corners and already beginning to melt before the all-powerful sun,—but a truce to this:—In *past* ages, when Cambria wore a very different aspect to what she does now, when her inhabitants were involved in the intricate mazes of Druidism, and when with more piety than many a Christian bows the knee to his Maker, they worshipped their *derwen* (oak), of *demlan maen* (stone temples), and reverenced their wizards and cunning men more than many of those professing Christianity their pastors and ministers, Superstition reared, unrestrained, its Hydratic head, subjecting under its dominion the sons of Cambria, from the

* The Author of the Invisible World, a profound believer in Ghosts, remarks "Were a thousand men of the greatest veracity and candour to make affidavits of things in this nature (Ghosts,) and were they to do it with their dying breath, such is the infidelity of this generation, they would not be believed."

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silver-bearded Druid under his favourite *derwen*, to the stripling that clambered through the thickets, —from the *Prince* in his palace to his humble dependant in the cot. This Superstition generated many traditional tales (more the offspring of fancy than reality) of Ghosts and Spirits, enumerated under the several appellations of *Cihoeraethau*, *Gwrachyribinod*, *adar y cyrph*, *Cwn bendith eu mammau*, *tyloethau*, *ysbrydion*, *ylyw a marw*, *y tylwyth teg*, *Ellyllon*, &c. and in after ages, *Canwyllau Cyrph*; with the above our forefathers pretended to be well acquainted, and held the relation of their appearances and freaks in such respect, that traditions respecting them were carried down from one generation to another, *but in the present* they are *fast* declining: indeed save what are retained in the memories of a *few* of the oldest sons of Wallia, and in different miscellanies and manuscripts, they are lost: but in order to treat more particularly and minutely upon these Superstitions, I shall, after the manner of the clergy, divide my text into Heads, viz.—Ghosts, Presentiments and Corpse Candles, Witchcraft, Traditions and Fairy Tales, Manners, Customs, &c. so *nawr am deni* for the Ghosts.

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CHAPTER I.

GHOSTS.

"If ancestry can be in ought believed,
Descending Spirits have convers'd with man."

"——————— And Corses pale,
And Ghosts that to the charnel dungeon throng,
And drag a length of clanking chain and wail."

BEATTIE.

"When o'er the wat'ry strath or quaggy moss
They see the gliding Ghosts unbodied troop."

MACKENZIE.

"THE ancients supposed every man to be possessed of three different ghosts, which after the dissolution of the human body were differently disposed of; these three ghosts were distinguished by the names of *Manes*, *Spiritus*, *Umbra*. The *manes* they fancied went down into the infernal region; the *spiritus* ascended to the skies; and the *umbra* hovered about the tomb, as being unwilling to quit its old connexions. Thus Dido, (Virg. Æn. IV. 384.) threatens Æneas after death that she will haunt him with her umbra, whilst her manes rejoices in

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her torments below."* They also assigned two genii to every person, as Horace calls them, a black and a white one; and historians relate, that there appeared to Cassius a man of great stature, with long hair and a grizzly beard, who upon being asked what he was, replied that he was his evil genius.

The Romans, on the 3d of the Ides, had a feast called *Feralia*, in honour of ghosts, and also one styled *Lemuria*, on the 19th of May, to pacify the manes of the dead and reverence the hobgoblins; and it is as singular a fact, as it is one that tends to confirm the ghost believers in the opinion, that there *have* been seen those sorts of beings from the *regnum umbrarum*, that nearly every nation from the rudest to the most enlightened, has stories to relate of the appearance of these "Spirits saved or goblins damned", many of which approximate to each other; the most frequent and by no means plausible reference either, which they adduce, is that the mention of them is made in Scripture; for instance, the Ghost of Samuel appearing unto Saul, the spirit mentioned in the 13th verse of the 4th chapter of Job. The disciples of Jesus supposing him to be a spirit, (Mark 6, 49,) also his appearance after his resurrection, when he says, "A spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have." (Luke 24, 39,) and that which most historians acknowledge, the appearance of the spectre to Brutus, &c.; indeed, some of our most eminent characters have believed

* Encyclopædia Britt. Vol. 9th, P. 697.

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in ghosts, as Pliny, Lord Byron, Dr. Johnson, Dr. Donne, Dr. Priestly, Dr. Sinclair, Sir T. Browne, Wesley, a numerous host of ministers, and "many others since the creation;" so that when we consider that the disciples of our Lord, and many of our *modern* wise-ones, gave credence to spirits, is it any cause for wonder and astonishment that our "rude forefathers of the hamlet" believed in such things?

The idea of ghosts and spectres seems to be innate in us, and although we may never have heard of such things appearing, *still* we fear and imagine that "such things are." What occasions our horror and uneasiness in walking through a churchyard at midnight, or our antipathy to walking out in the dark? I shall leave the reader to answer for himself.

It is the opinion of many, that these "goblins grim" are tools in the hands of the devil, but I am much surprised at his satanic majesty allowing them such liberty, if they are *his* subjects; the author of the History of the Devil is of opinion, that he (the devil) often appeared *incog.* as a ghost, apparition, &c.; but as many of my readers would doubtless wish to know what a ghost is, and his nature, I shall, as I cannot describe it better, quote what Captain Grose says in his Provincial Glossary.—"A Ghost is supposed to be the spirit of a person deceased, who is either commissioned to return for some special errand, such as the discovery of a

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murder, to procure restitution of lands or money unjustly witheld from an orphan or widow, or having committed some injustice whilst living, cannot rest till that is redressed: sometimes the occasion of spirits revisiting the world, is to inform their heir in what secret place, or private drawer in an old trunk, they had hidden the title deeds of the estate; or where, in troublesome times, they buried their money or plate.

In most of the relations of Ghosts, they are supposed to be mere aerial beings without substance, who can pass through walls and other solid bodies at pleasure. We sometimes also read of ghosts striking violent blows, and that if not made way for, they overturn all impediments like a furious whirlwind; the usual time of their appearance is midnight, seldom before it is dark, and no ghosts can appear on Christmas eve.

If during the time of an apparition, there is a lighted candle in the room, it will burn *extremely* blue: this is so universally acknowledged, that many eminent philosophers have busied themselves in accounting for it, without *once* doubting the fact; the coming of a spirit is announced some time before its appearance, by a variety of loud and dreadful noises, and is rarely visible to more than one person, although there are several in company.

It is here necessary to observe, that it has been universally found by experience, as well as affirmed

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by divers apparitions themselves, that a ghost has not the power to speak till it has been first spoken to; so that notwithstanding the urgency of the business on which it may come, every thing must stand still till the person visited can find sufficient courage to speak to it.

The mode of addressing a ghost is by commanding it in the name of the three persons of the Trinity, to tell you who it is and what is its business; this it may be necessary to repeat three times, after which it will in a low and hollow voice, declare its satisfaction at being spoken to, and desire the party addressing it not to be afraid, for it will do him no harm. This being premised, it commonly enters into its narrative, which being completed and its request or commands given, with injunction that they be immediately executed, it vanishes away, frequently in a flash of light.—During the narration of its business, a ghost must by no means be interrupted by questions of any kind; so doing is extremely dangerous: if any doubts arise they must be stated after the spirit has done its tale. Questions respecting its state are offensive, and not often answered.

If after the first appearance, the persons employed neglect, or are prevented from performing the message or business committed to them, the ghost appears continually to them, at first with a discontented, next an angry, and at length with a furious countenance; threatening to tear them in

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pieces if the matter is not forthwith executed.—Sometimes ghosts appear and disturb a house, without deigning to give any reason for so doing;* with these the shortest and only way is to exercise and eject them. For this purpose there must be two or three clergymen, and the ceremony must be performed in Latin, a language that strikes the most audacious ghost with terror. A ghost may be laid for any term less than 100 years,† but of all places the most common and what a ghost least likes, is the *Red Sea*, it being related in many instances, that ghosts have most earnestly besought the exorcists not to confine them in that place. Another species of human apparition may be noticed, though it does not come under the strict description of a ghost; these are the exact figures and resemblances of persons then living, often seen not only by their friends at a distance, but many times by themselves, of which there are several instances in *Aubrey's Miscellanies*, these are called *fetches*; in Cumberland *swarths*, and in Scotland *wraiths*."‡

* Some form an agreement while living, that the one who died first should appear; others pay visits to admonish their friends, as the instance Aubrey gives in his Miscellanies; the appearance of the Duchess of Mazarine to Madame de Beauclair, of Lady Beresford to Lord Tyrone, of Sir G. Villiers to Mr. Parker, and many others will shew.

† There is an instance related in Pembrokeshire of a Ghost's agreeing with some people whom it haunted, not to appear for seven years, at the expiration of which period it paid a visit, when they resorted again to a like agreement.

‡ In Northumberland they are called Waffs.

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Whether the soil, the inhabitants, the picturesque beauties of the country, or what it was that excited them, it seems to me that the ghosts *were* attracted by *something*, or *had* some strange *predilection* formerly for Cambria; in fact I think they were indigenous, for their visits were certainly not like angels "few and far between." Perhaps the spirits, if it be true that departed ones have a knowledge of what is going forward in these regions, seeing something censurable in the conduct or actions of their relatives and friends that displeased them, broke out in the pandemic failing of the Welsh (choler,) and in their rage forced themselves out of old Charon's clutches, to warn their living brethren; but whatever was their motive or incitement, more ghosts and goblins I think were prevalent in *Wales*, than in England or any other country.

I shall now present to the reader a concatenation of *authentic* ghost stories, which I have collected from various individuals, who of course delivered them as *facts*,—date and year when they occurred is out of the question.

It is pretty generally known in Carmarthen, that it was the custom (one not quite obsolete, it being revived about a year or so ago) of a spirit to make his or her appearance every night, (I presume there are male and female ones) and follow them, to the no small terror of the travellers on the road to St. John's town; she was generally supposed

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to be a witch, and the place is still styled after her, *Pwx llan wick*; but one would imagine a witch would not take the trouble to be there so often without some emolument; be that as it may, it is credited by the illiterate Welsh to have been as true as that St. David is patron saint of Wales, that there *has been* a being haunting that road, to whatever *genus* he or she may appertain; and it was said re-appeared about a *year* ago, or thereabouts, probably to see how matters were going on, and to give information of the different marches of improvement, intellect, &c. in the shades below. If I mistake not, it was about the period that the *Catholic Emancipation Bill* was being discussed,—no wonder it raised "spirits from the vasty deep;" and if these were days of ghosts and goblins, doubtless we should have some deceased *publicans* or *welshmen* appearing to condemn the Beer and Welsh Judicature Bills. It is also related of a man crossing a field near Carmarthen, belonging to a choleric farmer, whose name I had better not mention, or I shall perchance be served as the person in the story, that after proceeding a short way he was overtaken by the ghost of the passionate proprietor of the meadow, who appeared *in terrorem*, and immediately commenced operations upon the back of the poor trespasser with a stick, in such an unmerciful manner, that he was obliged to scamper off "with the beard on the shoulder,"* and what be-

* Never looking round. Span. Prov.

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tween fright and the efficacy of the drubbing, he was under the necessity of keeping his bed for several days; it must have been a "blast from hell," not an "air from heaven," that blew *this ghost*, at least it was "an ill wind" that blew the countryman no good,—it was well that such vindictive gentlemen seldom made their appearance.

It appears curious, that *nearly all* the inhabitants of the invisible and unknown world, who favour us with their presence, possess a strange propensity to mischief, or to torment people,* which induces me to believe that Satan has got "a hand under the table" in their proceedings, and the following story will shew that there are frolicsome, as well as grave and chastising spirits; but God keep every kind away, for I think the less one has to do with them the better.—The Farm of Ysgol goch, in the parish of Conwil, Carmarthenshire, is in a rather retired situation, and nearly surrounded by wood; such places are generally the resort of sprites, and many a night have the good folks of the house been frightened and disturbed by the *ysbryd drwg's* frolics; "*indeed, indeed*," *'tis true*: one night in particular, (and be it told this gentleman generally chose stormy nights, which boded no

* Some suppose these merry and mischievous ones are devils, as the drumming one in the well in Northamptonshire, Lady Katt's devil, in Essex, who came knocking at the window or wainscot all night, "cum multis aliis."

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good sign where he came from,) as the farmer's daughter was seated by the fire side, hearing the tale of love told by her paramour, whilst the boisterous wind whistled through the chinks of the door, and goody whoo joined in solemn concert, suddenly the door flies open, and in walks a genteel personage in black, with a three-cornered hat, which he hangs on a nail and then goes into an adjoining room; but the shrieks and cries of the affrighted damsel, and speedy appearance of the drowsy inmates, who were unwillingly disturbed from their sleep, caused the *ysbryd* and his hat to disappear, *dans un clin d'œil*; at another time, when sunk in the arms of Somnus, and when Queen Mab was taking her evening ride over them, they would be alarmed at the sound of the pewter plates falling to the ground, and dancing about; but when they arose in the morning, expecting to see these ornaments so much esteemed by the Cambrian peasantry, on the floor, would be astonished at beholding them in their proper places, doubtless observing, *y mai'r diawl wedi bod yma*; sometimes when the door was locked and bolted, it would fly open, and the servant would come down stairs and place an iron bar in the ground to secure it the better,—but spite of this it would open, and the drifting snow enter, but when they awoke next day they would find it secured and locked, with the iron bar in the same position as the servant had placed it, as if nothing had occurred: should any one be haunted in like

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manner by a facetious gentleman of this sort, the best remedy *a le chasser*, is to adopt St. Dunstan's plan, or get the poker heated, but *do not* as the Frenchman did when he met *Mons. l'Anglois*, hesitate, and ask whether you shall have de plaisir, de satisfaction, to run it into his body,—but say in Welsh, for if it is the devil he will perfectly understand you, being a great proficient in languages, "*Oes na aid di ffurdd, mi ath drywanaf a hwn trwy dy berfedd*," and suit the action to the word, by letting him taste his own element, and if *this* will not cause him to make his exit, I do not know what will.

A servant girl related to me, that her father was returning home one night from Yscarhir, to Carmarthen, and when he approached the paper mill near the town, he perceived something in the hedge of a meadow, clad in white and about the size of a boy of twelve years of age; not believing in supernatural objects, he had the boldness to walk up to it, when it receded, he following it, until it came to the middle of the field, when lo! it disappeared in an instant: the effect it made on his mind was such, that as soon as he entered his house in Water-street, he fell down insensible.

It is related of one David, of Pille, Pembrokeshire, who was a stranger to fear, and I imagine rather lunatic too, that he was accustomed to sleep in the charnel-house of the village church every night, but his brethren not well pleased with this

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conduct of his, determined to frighten him, and accordingly covering themselves with sheets, proceeded to the receptacle of bones, but instead of causing their brother's hair to stand on end as they imagined, he made it *vice versa*, for picking up some large stones that lay near, he cried out "O! you are devils sure enough, and I am David of Pille, so here's towards you, (throwing the stones at them with all his might,) so that he soon showed them with whom they had to deal, and they were glad to take to their heels with a few wounds and bruises. It is said that a young man, returning from courting through the church-yard, (there being a road through,) was so alarmed at the companion of bones, crying out "O you are come at last are you?" that it was the cause of his death soon after; but this eccentric character in a few weeks after this, perceived something *more* than a *mortal ghost*, and although he would never mention what he *had seen*, it was firmly credited that he was visited by some supernatural being, for he never could be persuaded afterwards to leave home in the dark.

There are many instances narrated of a ghost's appearance about a bridge called *Pont Cnwca bach*, near Ysgarhir, Carmarthenshire, and it is said that a labourer going very early to work to Bolowan, met this grim spectre, which so affrighted him, that he walked into a rivulet near, went out of his road through hedges and ditches, in a state of aberration

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of mind, and as soon as he entered the house fell down in a fit! Another person of the name of Davies, now residing at Carmarthen, returning home about the time

"When the curfew with his sullen note,
Unchain'd to roam the earth each elfin sprite,"

heard a strange rustling noise before he came to this bridge, as if some one was following him, but he did not pay much attention to it until he sat down to rest himself on a field gate, when he heard it distinctly; not being at all daunted, he demanded who was there? when there immediately appeared to his view this goblin grim, who "grinned horribly a ghastly smile," and at the sound of his voice

"——— shrunk in haste away,
And vanish'd from his sight."

He can corroborate this, as he has not yet become a member of these *corps terrifique*; and I have been informed by persons who have experienced it, that in crossing this bridge people have been seized with a kind of *cold dread*, similar to that of *Cyoeraeth*, and felt a peculiar sensation which they could not describe.

Another individual of the name of Davies, a farmer, walking up the road to Newchurch, one night, was met by a ghost, not in a "dilated or condensed" form, but in the formidable shape of a great shaggy dog; having a stick in his hand, he thought he would ascertain what materials this

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bookie (ghost) was made of, so he strikes at him, *(tous ses forces)* but *horrible dictu!* the stick hit the ground, going through the ghost as if he was air, upon this the *ghast*-ly* spectre gnashed its teeth, grinned terribly, and disappeared in an instant, without saying bow wow.—There was a ghost for you!

A friend related to me, that among the *on dit's* of Lywell, Breconshire, was one of an old woman called Tabitha Edwards, who accustomed to milk the cows of a clergyman, was seen one morning by the wife of the latter to bring in a pailful of milk, and in the course of an hour to bring in another; surprised at the circumstance, she enquired of the old dame how it came to pass that there was such an unusual quantum of milk, as to require being brought twice, when she solemnly affirmed that she had never been but once, which was afterwards proved. Dr. Brewster gives several specimens of this spectral illusion.

In Monmouthshire, implicit credence is given to the following: At Crwmlyn in that county, two men were accustomed to work together, and necessarily contracted friendship, but death who disunites all bonds, took one away, yet afterwards permitted him the liberty of occasionally visiting his friend on earth, who not relishing his presence much, on one occasion demanded his business, when the ghost informed him that it was lucky he

* Gast in Welsh is the feminine of dog.

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had spoken then, for if he had not,* he had power to hurt him; and after commanding him to be ready to go with him on the next night, he departed, but was punctual in his visit at the appointed time;

"It was a cold winter's evening,
And fast came down the snow,"

when he arrived, and although the weather was so rough that the man of a less torrid clime would have gladly excused himself, veneration for his companion's shade made him comply and follow; without spending much time about compliments, &c. they set out, and came in process of time to a huge stone, which he of the other world bade his friend lift up, who replied that he had not sufficient strength, (it being a large piece of rock) "but try," said the man of ether,—he did, when lo! he lifted it as if it had been a feather, and drew from beneath it a pike, or mattock: the man related that at this time, the light was as great as if the sun had shone, and that no impression of the feet of either was left on the snow: they had not yet completed their business, but went a little farther on to a river, into which the spirit desired his spiritless companion to throw the pike, standing with his back towards the water; which being accomplished, he conducted him home and never afterwards visited him; the man for a considerable time after, was out of his senses, and the superstitious class strongly condemn

* It is said that if a person does not address a ghost after his third visit, that he has the power to hurt him in some manner.

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the practice of hiding any thing, relating this as an instance of the evil of doing so.

An aged person from Glamorganshire, related to me, that in his youthful days he knew a young woman, who resided at Millencourt, about four miles from Neath, who was frequently disturbed for more than a twelvemonth, by one from the terra incognita, and one evening as she was standing near the door, was carried off by force, over a mountain and wood, brought back again to the door, with the loss of her reason, through affright, and although frequently interrogated by her relatives and others, as to what she had seen and heard, she would never confess a syllable more, than that she was borne away by one of the "spirits of the air."

I am informed that the following tale is generally known in Breconshire. As one Morgan Prythrech, of Trelech, was returning home about the time

"When goblins haunt from fire or fen,
Or mine or flood the walks of men,"

He was met by a young man, who had been a tenant of the tomb for more than two years, but whom he did not immediately recognize, although he imagined he knew him; so stretching forth his hand he accosted him with "*shwt yr ych chwi?*"* but the ghost, not fond of such familiarity, withheld

* How d'ye do?

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his, and soon informed him that it was no *earthly* inhabitant that he had addressed, for he bade him go on a certain night to a room in the farm house where he lived, take a purse which he said he would find in a certain place there, and throw into a river near Llandovery, Carmarthenshire; the man promised to obey his injunction, but when the night arrived and he was in the barn going to sleep, intending to jockey his departed friend, his ghostship appeared and summoned him to follow. It was about "that hallowed hour" ten, and the man accordingly went to fetch his Sunday shoes from the house, in order to appear decent; now it happened that one was polished and the other dirty, but as there was no time to be lost, he put them on as he found them, and although several persons were in the room at the time, no one observed him. When all was right they started, and at length came to the destined river into which he was desired to throw the purse and its contents, which being done, a lambent flame appeared upon the surface of the stream for a moment or two; the man was then asked by the ghost whether his company back would be agreeable; as a matter of course he was answered with a negative, and went alone, but strange to say arrived at home about twelve o'clock, with his shoes precisely in the same condition as when he first set out, although the roads were exceedingly dirty,—so that he believes he was carried by some invisible agency, as he felt no fatigue in the least.

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I was also informed by a woman of Glamorganshire, that a relative of her's returning from seeing the object of his affections, being tired, sat down and unconsciously fell asleep, but he had not slept long before he was disturbed by a strange noise, and looking up, he recognized the shade of his departed grandfather; enquiring the cause of his visit, he was told to look under the corner of the roof of his house (a thatched one), to take a pair of silver spurs (which were surreptitiously obtained by him when living) from there, and throw them into a river, after which he said he should be at peace; he acted as he was instructed, and although many persons were near when he was in the act of taking them away, not one saw him; and when he threw the purloined property into the stream, a bright flame flashed along the river for a considerable time.

It was reported that a room in the mansion of a gentleman of Neath, was haunted many years ago by an apparition, and that whenever the windows were opened, they would soon after close of their own accord; but one sabbath day, a servant girl lately entered into his service, and possessed of considerable fortitude, engaged to sit in the room while the family were at church, pledging that the windows should be open when they returned; she therefore entered the room, threw the *ffenestri* open and took her seat; but had not much time to deli-

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berate, before the apparition came as a fine looking old gentleman, and sat on another chair; the heroine soon broke the silence by enquiring his business, when he desired her to inform her master, that if he would raise a certain quarry in the dairy, he would find a pot of gold, which, if taken away he would never trouble them with his presence again: his request being complied with, he kept his word.

I have been able to ascertain only one oral account of his right worshipful the Tartarean monarch visiting in *propria persona*, the vicinity of Carmarthen, and *that was* to a farmer who was a very great miser, and whose name I shall not mention, as his relatives are now on "the land of the living;" he related that he was met several times by the devil, who appeared

"Black as ten furies, terrible as hell,"

and would jump up behind him on his horse, playing all sorts of pranks, and annoying him very much, so that he was compelled to take some one with him when he returned from Carmarthen market in the dark. Beware then ye misers! set not your affections on gold, or your infernal father may pay you a visit, and you be put to the expence, (horrid word

* There are several accounts given of his appearance in England, and his visits to the Saints it seems were very frequent, as the instances of St. Anthony, St. Dunstan, St. Francis, St. Lupus, St. Lydvina, Dominicius, Luther, &c. will shew.

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to your ears) of keeping some one to bear you company.

According to Giraldus it appears, that some goblins, or devils more properly, have conducted themselves with much propriety in their visits upon earth, for he relates that a *demon* acted very consistently for some time as butler, at a hall in Pembrokeshire; he was esteemed to have had the best hand at stirring a fire of any in the household, and it was observed after the calid gentleman's departure, which was occasioned by some holy word being repeated in his presence, that he had always snuffed the candle with his fingers, and frequently substituted his *hands* for the tongs: another fiend also, according to the same author, took upon him the sacerdotal character, becoming a clergyman! which, as a modern writer observes, seems very strange indeed, but yet derives some support from an anecdote related by Jean d' Asie, and also from an old saying respecting the devil's building near a church; from which it might be inferred, that he wished to enter when an opportunity presented itself. This reverend fiend conducted himself, as the tale goes, with great propriety in his professional duties, and his real character was detected accidentally by a *lapsus linguæ* in colloquial discourse; for conversing once with a person upon ancient history, and disputing about chronology, the reverend and incarnate fiend in his warmth of argument,

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insisted upon being right, saying "It was so, I am confident, for it occurred in Pontius Pilate's time, and I saw it;" as he had slipped this unawares, he was extremely mortified, and blushing exceedingly vanished.—May not the phrase to "blush blue" have its derivation from this circumstance?

I am informed that many years ago, Mr. Thomas, a religious character residing at Pante, about three miles from Carmarthen, whilst engaged in devotional exercises one night, was suddenly surprised at the appearance of a great light, which was as brilliant as that of the sun in its meridian splendour, and a numerous body of spirits, having the appearance of angels, accompanying it, and singing a psalm commencing with "*Pa hyd? Pa hyd? Dychwelwch feibion adda!*"* after which they disappeared, but he had no sooner recommenced his devotion, than the same glorious light presented itself and soon vanished again.

The following was obtained from one of those receptacles of stories *yclept* an old woman; deriving it from such a source, its truth will not for a moment be doubted. The evening was far gone, and the sable mantle of Night about covering the face of Nature, when a traveller of the name of Noe arrived at an Inn in Pembrokeshire, and called for refreshment: after remaining some time, he remarked that he must proceed on his journey; "surely"

* "How long? how long? Return ye sons of Adam!"

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said the astonished landlord " you will not travel to night, for it is said that a ghost haunts that road, crying out ' The days are long and the nights cold to wait for Noe." " O, I am the man sought for" said he, and immediately departed; but strange to say, neither Noe nor the ghost was ever heard of afterwards. Some said that this Noe had deceived a young lady, whose ghost took vengeance on him, (beware deceitful lovers, of ghosts appearing to you!) others were of opinion that he was a murderer, but I cannot say which are right, or where poor Noe went to,—however it seems certain that it was to no good place.*

But there was a peculiar species of ghosts, denominated in Wales according to the etymology of the very Rev. Archdeacon Beynon, *Cyoeraeth*, and deemed the most horrible of supernatural beings.—The following is a description of it, given in the powerful language of the welsh, which it would be impossible with justice to translate; " *Gwallt drys-sedig, dannedd hirion duon, breichiau truain, croe-nog gwedi gwywo o hyd anferthol, heb un cyfar alwch rhyngddynt a'r chorph anniben, &c.* Some imagine that *cyoeraeth* is the same as *cwn bendith eu mammau*, or *tyloethod*, which are of two kinds; but it evidently appears that it is not the case in *South Wales*, but that the *Cyoeraeth* is another

* The tales of Ghosts, &c. are exceedingly numerous in the Principality, but it would require a very considerable time and expence to collect them all.

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name for *Gwrachyribin*, or as some have it *Gwrach-yr-oer-boen*; if so, the word *cy-oer-aeth*, particularly the two last syllables, very naturally refers to its peculiar cold chilling voice; if *Gwrach-yrybin* and *Cyoeraeth* are synonimous, then the former description of a being with dishevelled hair, long black teeth, long lank withered arms, &c. connected with the idea of its frightful voice and horrible cadaverous appearance, is very natural and applicable. This *Cyoeraeth* or *Gwrachyrybin*, as I before observed, was thought to be the most frightful of all Welsh apparitions, so much so indeed, that a Welsh poet wished no more to his enemy than that it would pay him a visit;

"Un felldith fwyni chanaf fi,
It gael yr adyn boliog bawlyd,
Nai yn gydywraith fod i ti,
I gwrachyrybin schrechlyd."

To represent an ugly woman we often say "*Y mae mor salw a Gwrachyribin*" (she is as ugly as the Gwrachyribin); but this was esteemed a *very rare* spirit, and was oftener *heard* than seen; its shriek is described as having such an effect, as literally to freeze the blood in the veins of those who heard it, and was never uttered except when the ghost came to a cross road, or went by some water, which (if a female) she splashed with her hands, making at the same time the most doleful sounds, and exclaiming "*Oh! Oh! fy ngwr, fy ngwr!*" (my husband! my husband!) or (if a male) "*fy ngwraig! fy*

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ngwraig !" (my wife ! my wife!), or "*fy mlentyn, fy mlentyn, fy mlentyn bach !*" (my child, my child, my little child !) A person is said to have met a *cyoeraeth* on the road at night, and taking it for a woman, would have played her a trick, but oh, the horror of horrors ! as the narrator emphatically exclaimed, "*Och Dduw y Gwrachyribin oedd hi a nid menyw !* (oh God ! it was the *Gwrachyribin* and not a woman !) oh ! the chill scream "*Fy ngwr, fy ngwr !*" he did not wait for the expression of the words a second time, but without ceremony and rejecting all intercourse with her ladyship, he passed through thorns and briars, taking to the fields, and on the wings of terror soon arrived home. It is said that the circumstance so affected him, that the words, "*fy ngwr, fy ngwr,*" sounded continually in his ears, and so impressed were they upon his mind, that he resolved to live in "single blessedness," and never could hear the word *gwr* afterwards without suffering a painful sensation. The *Cyoeraeth* was said to appear in a female dress, and some affirm (erroneously) that it was fatal to meet it.

It is reported of a son of Vulcan residing at Trelech, Breconshire, that having occasion to work all night, he was disturbed about twelve o'clock by the dreadful shriek of the *cyoeraeth*, but supposing it to be "some wilful person or persons" endeavouring to intimidate him, he imitated it, until it approached his shop, when it gave such a scream that almost terrified the poor blacksmith out of his wits,

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who instantly covered his fire with his apron, it being said that a ghost will not pass by a light; he related that a person whom he knew died soon after.

It would be arrogating too much to myself, to give my humble opinion upon such an important subject, as the cause of superstition and spectral illusion; I shall therefore quote what learned writers have advanced upon this "ever to be controverted" subject, yet I firmly credit that persons of fearful dispositions have created most of the ghosts themselves.

The following extract is from Dr. Brewster's Edinburgh Journal of Science;* it is written in a letter to the Dr. "Those who have read Dr. Hibbert's admirable work on the Philosophy of Apparitions, and have appreciated the ingenious views which he has taken of this remarkable class of mental phenomena, will peruse with double interest the very singular case of spectral illusion, which forms the subject of this paper.

It was communicated to me by the gentleman whose lady was under its influence, and who was himself present during the whole progress of the illusion which affected the eye. Were I permitted to mention his name, his station in society, and as a man of science, would authenticate the minutest particulars in the following narrative, and satisfy the most scrupulous reader that the case has been

* See also Mirror, Vol. 15, P. 363.

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philosophically as well as faithfully described.—The gentleman and lady, indeed, were previously well aware of the existence and nature of this class of facts, and, so far from regarding the present case as at all supernatural, or even out of the ordinary course of things, they watched it from its commencement as a case of spectral illusion, and have therefore impressed upon the narrative a character which does not belong to any previous case, where the patient and the narrator were the same person.

"On the 26th of December, 1829, about half-past four in the afternoon, Mrs. —— was standing near the fire in the hall, and on the point of going up stairs to dress, when she heard, as she supposed, my voice calling her by name, '—— ——, come here, come to me!' She imagined that I was calling at the door to have it opened, went to it, and was surprised on opening it to find no one. She returned towards the fire, and again heard the same voice calling, very distinctly and loud, '—— Come, come here.' She then opened two other doors of the same room, but seeing no one, she returned to the fire-place. After a few moments, she heard the same voice still calling, '—— ——, come to me, come, come away,' this time in a loud, plaintive, and somewhat impatient tone. She answered as loudly, 'Where are you? I don't know where you are,'—still imagining that I was somewhere in search of her; but receiving no answer, she shortly went up stairs. On my return to the house about

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half an hour afterwards, she inquired why I had called to her so often, and where I was; and was of course surprised to hear I had not been near the house at the time.

"On the 30th of the same month, at about four o'clock, p. m., Mrs. —— came down stairs into the drawing-room, which she had quitted a few minutes before, and on entering the room, saw me, as she supposed, standing with my back to the fire. She addressed me, asking how it was I had returned so soon. (I had left the house for a walk half an hour before,) She said I looked fixedly at her, with a serious and thoughtful expression of countenance, but did not speak. She supposed I was busied in thought, and sat down in an arm-chair near the fire, and close within a couple of feet at most of the figure she still saw standing before her. As, however, the eyes still continued to be fixed upon her, after a few minutes she said, 'Why don't you speak ——— ?' The figure upon this moved off towards the window, at the further end of the room, the eyes still gazing on her, and passed so very close to her in doing so, that she was struck by the circumstance of hearing no step nor sound, nor feeling her clothes brushed against, nor even any agitation in the air. The idea then arose for the first time into her mind, that it was no reality, but a spectral illusion (being a person of sense, and habituated to account rationally for most things, the notion of any thing supernatural was out of the question.) She

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recollected, however, your having mentioned that there was a sort of *experimentum crucis* applicable to these cases, by which a genuine ghost may be distinguished from one conjured up by merely natural causes: namely, the pressing the eye in order to produce the effect of *seeing double*, when, according to your assertion, a true Tartarian ghost would be duplicated as well as every thing else; while the morbid idea being, I suppose, an impression on the retina would, or ought to remain single. I am sorry, however, to say that the opportunity for verifying your theory was unfavourable. Before Mrs. ——— was able distinctly to double her vision, my figure had retreated to the window, and disappeared when there. The lady followed, shook the curtains, and tried the window, being still loth to believe it was not a reality, so distinct and forcible was the impression. Finding, however, that there was no natural means of egress, she became convinced of having seen a spectral apparition, such as are recorded in Dr. Hibbert's work, and consequently felt no alarm or agitation. The appearance lasted four or five minutes. It was bright day-light, and Mrs. —— is confident that the apparition was fully as vivid as the reality; and when standing close to her, it concealed, of course, the real objects behind it. Upon being told of this my *visible* appearance in the spirit, having been only *audible* a few days before, I was, as you may imagine, more alarmed

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for the health of the lady than for my own approaching death, or any other fatality the vision might be supposed to forebode. Still both the stories were so very much *en regle* as ghost stories, the three calls of the plaintive voice, each one louder than the preceding, the fixed eyes and mournful expression of the phantom, its noiseless step and spirit-like vanishing, were all so characteristic of the *Wraith*, that I might have been unable to shake off some disagreeable fancies, such as a mind once deeply saturated with the poison of nursery tales cannot altogether banish, had it not been for a third apparition, at whose visit I myself assisted a few days afterwards, and which I think is the key-stone of the case, rendering it as complete as could be wished.

"On the 4th of this month (January, 1830), five days after the last apparition, at about ten o'clock at night, I was sitting in the drawing-room with Mrs. ———, and in the act of stirring the fire, when she exclaimed, 'Why there's the cat in the room.' I asked 'Where?' She replied, 'There, close to you.' 'Where?' I repeated. 'Why, on the rug to be sure, between yourself and the coal-scuttle.' I had the poker in my hand, and I pushed it in the direction mentioned. 'Take care,' she cried out, 'take care, you are hitting her with the poker.' I again asked her to point out exactly where she saw the cat. She replied, 'Why, sitting up there close to your feet on the rug—she is look-

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ing at me: it is Kitty—come here Kitty.' There are two cats in the house, one of which went by this name: they were rarely, if ever, in the drawing-room. At this time Mrs. ——— had certainly no idea that the sight of the cat was an illusion. I asked her to touch it. She got up for the purpose, and seemed as if she was pursuing something which moved away. She followed a few steps, and then said, 'It has gone under that chair.' I told her it was an illusion. She would not believe it. I lifted up the chair; there was nothing there, nor did Mrs. ——— see any thing more of it. I searched the room all over, and found nothing. There was a dog lying on the hearth, who would have betrayed great uneasiness had a cat been in the room. He was perfectly quiet. In order to be quite certain, however, I rang the bell, and sent for the two cats. They were both found in the housekeeper's room. The most superstitious person could now doubt no longer as to the real character of all these illusory appearances; and the case is so complete, that I hope there will be no renewal of them, symptomatic as they of course are of a disordered state of the body. I am sorry to say Mrs. ——— as well as myself forgot to try in time the *experimentum crucis* on the cat.

"Mrs. ——— has naturally a morbidly sensitive imagination, so strongly affecting her corporeal impressions, that the story of any person having suffered severe pain by accident or otherwise, will

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occasionally produce acute twinges of pain in the corresponding parts of her person. An account, for instance, of the amputation of an arm, will produce an instantaneous and severe sense of pain in her own arm, and so of other relations. She is subject to talk in her sleep with great fluency, to repeat poetry very much at length, particularly when unwell, and even to *cap verses* for half an hour together, never failing to quote lines beginning with the final letter of the preceding, till her memory is exhausted.

"She has, during the last six weeks, been considerably reduced and weakened by a tiresome cough, which has also added to her weakness, by preventing the taking of a daily tonic, to which she had for some time been accustomed. She had also confined herself from this cause to the house for some weeks, which is not usual with her, being accustomed to take a great deal of air and exercise. Her general health has not been strong for some time past, and a long experience has proved, beyond a doubt, that her ill health is attributable to a disordered state of the digestive organs. These details are necessary for a complete understanding of this case, which strikes me as being one of remarkable interest, from combining the characters of an ordinary ghost story with those of an indubitable illusion; as well as from the circumstance occurring to a person of strong mind, devoid of any superstitious fancies, and to be implicitly relied on for the truth of all the minutest details of the appear-

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ances. Indeed, I do not recollect any well authenticated and recent instance of *auricular* delusion like the first of those I have related; though, of course, the warning voices and sounds which have frightened so many weak persons into their graves, must have been of this nature. Mrs. ——— tells me, that about ten years ago a similar circumstance happened to her, when residing at Florence, and in perfect health. While undressing after a ball, she heard a voice repeatedly call her by name, and was at that time unable to account for the fact."

Drs. Hibbert and Brewster seem to coincide in their opinions of the additional light which the narrative throws upon the ever to be controverted theory of apparitions, and the former gentleman conceives that the association of spectral illusions, with that intense state of sympathetic feeling by which an account, for example, of the amputation of an arm will produce an instantaneous and severe sense of pain in the lady's own arm, as a striking feature in the case, and as calculated to throw additional light upon the theory of spectral illusions; he considers the instance given as one of the most interesting pathological instances of the kind yet published.

Dr. Haslam thus speaks of Imagination;—"There is no evidence that the infant exhibits any manifestation of imagination; and, although in the season of childhood and at the commencement of speech, it has been the mischievous practice of the

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t or nurse to delight the pupil with the hopes possible attainment, to describe an incredible erance of nature's bounties, to reconcile trans-ions that are repugnant to the laws of nature, alarm the tender fabric of the intellect with lation of evil spirits, goblins, apparitions, and hole machinery of terror; yet the child itself s no conception. The delusions, thus early ssed, usually continue through life; they con-e the foundations of our fears and prejudices, enfeeble the mind, and stifle the natural curio-hat the child inherits, to become acquainted the phenomena of this world; they retard his ncement in knowledge, and render him diso-ent to the conviction of reasoning. These rrible imaginings" are therefore, not the spon-ous productions of the youthful mind, but a on infused to beguile the credulity, and conta-te the stamina of the intellect."

Dr. Southey thus gives his opinion, "My se-belief amounts to this, that preternatural im-sions are sometimes communicated to us for purposes, and that departed spirits are some-s permitted to manifest themselves."*

The following is gleaned from an excellent le on spectres, in the Encyclopædia Britannica, 19th, P. 575.—

"Can we suppose" (continues the writer) at the all wise Governor of the world would

* Colloquies.

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permit his angels to render themselves visible to the eye of man for no purpose at all, or for a purpose which might have been equally well accomplished without their interposition? Would this be consistent with perfect wisdom, or would it be consistent with the excellence and superiority of understanding which we are taught to ascribe to those elevated beings? The whole will of God is revealed to us in the Scriptures, what further use then for the visible interposition of angels? And if God has given no commission to his angels to deliver to men since the publication of the Christian Religion, is there any probability that he would give any commission to evil spirits? It will be said that this doctrine is taught in the New Testament, in these words, "The devil goeth about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour." All that can be deduced from these words, upon the supposition that they refer to a malignant spirit, is merely that he goeth about seducing men to vice. But it is not by assuming a hideous form and presenting himself to the midnight traveller, that such a purpose is to be accomplished. We never heard of any evil spirits that required men to steal, or perpetrate robbery or murder. They only appeared to crazy, timorous individuals, who have whims and fancies enow of their own to agitate their minds, though no preternatural vision should ever appear to them. But supposing it were possible for men to return after death, for what purpose should they return? To

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describe to us what is passing in the other world, to animate us to virtue, by informing us of the rewards which there await the good; or to alarm us, by describing the punishment of the wicked. Divine Providence has wisely thrown a veil over futurity. We know every thing of another world from the Scripture, which it is proper for us to know, and as to incentives to virtue we are already blessed with a number sufficiently great and powerful for moral beings, who are to act from rational motives and not from compulsion. "He that will not hear Moses and the Prophets, will not be persuaded though one rose from the dead."

"Ghosts often appear to discover some crime that has been committed; but they never appear to a magistrate or person in authority, but to some illiterate clown who has no connection with the affair at all, and who in general is the most improper person in the world for making the discovery. With respect to the evidence in favour of spectres, if examined ever so slightly, it will be found very defective. Ghosts only appear to one person at a time, and are only seen in the night; they are visible only to ignorant and credulous persons, and never present themselves to men of education and learning. In the infant state of the intellectual powers, every thing is considered as possessing life and intelligence. The child beats the stool over which he has fallen, with the same passion as he would beat his companion. The young girl talks to her

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doll, as if it understood her. The savages ascribe every change which they observe on the face of nature, to the action of some animated being. As knowledge advances, they single out those beings which seem to produce the most striking effects; arrange them in order, and divide the government of the world between them. Unable at the same time, to conceive any notion of a pure spirit, they imagine those divinities are corporeal beings. This is the foundation of Idolatry. The belief of spectres is but another step.—That these animated corporeal beings, to whom they address their prayers and who preside over the world, should on particular occasions display themselves to the human eye, is what they must be previously disposed to expect. Hence the numberless appearances of the heathen gods, of the Persian and Mahometan genii. The belief of ghosts may be easily deduced from the opinion entertained of a future state. These opinions are founded on that essential doctrine of natural religion, that there is another world, in which men shall exist when death has removed them hence.—This doctrine has been universally received by savage and civilized nations. But the general opinion in ancient and rude nations was, that departed spirits retained the same external appearance, passions, and principles as before. Nothing therefore was more natural than the opinion, that they might occasionally revisit this world, from a desire to alleviate the sufferings of those beloved friends and relations

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whom they had left behind them; or to communicate from the unseen world what might be important to their welfare. The apparition of the ghosts of murderers, is easily explained upon the same general principles; but many other causes concur to confirm and propagate this belief. These are imperfect vision united with fear, opium, nightmare, diseases, drunkenness, and dreams."

The Rev. Dr. Cotton Mather, F. R. S. after describing the visits of demons, &c. in his "Magnalia Christi Americana" continues, "Flashy people may burlesque these things, but when hundreds of the most sober people in a country, where they have as much mother wit certainly as the rest of mankind, know them to be true, nothing but the absurd and froward spirit of sadducism can question them, &c."

Blackwood in a chapter on goblins thus speaks* "Many persons who believe implicitly in the reality of apparitions, feel very little inconvenience or apprehension from their possible propinquity; while others, who have no jot of faith in fheir existence, are subject, nevertheless, very frequently, to nervous uneasiness, when they think of them. . . . . "There be infidels who fear, and believers who are at ease. The faithful, who tremble not, are chiefly among the old. The incredulous, who fear, will be among the young and the enthusiastic. Whether it be that our sympathies, like our appetites, become

* Ed. Mag. Vol. 14th, P. 639.

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(generally) callous in the decline of life, or that, by a special dispensation of Providence, we lose, as we advance in years some of that aversion to death and its symbols, which belongs to the earlier stages of existence, certain it is, that usage has thrown upon the aged, the duty of acting and officiating about the dead.

"On the occasional nervous mis-givings of unbelievers, an Italian heretic speaks, and to his "own case in point", "I do not wonder," he sets out, "that ordinary scatter-brained people, who never know their own minds upon any question, should waver as to the truth or falsehood of supernatural visitations. Such people doubt by daylight, and believe as soon as it gets dark. But why is it, that I, who wish to believe, and yet cannot,—who for twenty years have been dying to see a ghost, and am sure that I never shall see one as long as I live: why is it, that under certain circumstances I have been disquieted, when the subject has crossed my mind?" The author meets with a real haunted house at Bologne, and makes an experiment whether he can convince his nerves as well as his understanding, he thus describes the manner in which he passed his time, &c. "Of course, I saw nothing, and I expected to see nothing, unless some trick would be practised for the purpose of alarming me. But my night, notwithstanding, was far from being a pleasant one. I wished that something might appear, and yet I was not at ease. I remain-

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ed firm, so long as I kept my attention fixed upon the business in which I was engaged, but, the moment the effort was relaxed, I became—not alarmed—but uncomfortable. Strange thoughts forced themselves, whether I would or not, upon my mind; and although I felt their folly perfectly, yet I could not shake them off. I wanted to fasten the door of the room in which I was sitting, and I found an unconquerable aversion come over me to rising from the chair; and the matter, at one time, seemed to be getting worse every moment. I felt as though I should lose the full controul of my senses. I looked around the room a dozen times—I tried to sing but could not, I took up a book, but could not read three sentences together, then I chattered rapidly any jargon to myself, &c." He goes through the affair in the end, with extreme exertion and discomfort, " and yet had I been asked" he concludes " at the time when I felt most distressed—whether I had any thing to apprehend? I should have answered, most certainly (even at the time) that I had not.

" This man was the victim of a lively imagination, and it is no more wonderful that he should have shrunk from a peril, which he knew existed only in his own fancy, than it would be if he had wept at reading a pathetic narrative, which he knew to be a fable. Touching the reality of spectral appearances, I protest altogether against being put down as a scoffer. I have my own personal cause of belief,

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and perhaps it may seem a peculiar one, but that rests entirely between me and my conscience. I never heard a story yet, which (faith set apart) was not capable of solution; either the party who *saw* was mad, or asleep, or intoxicated, or he deceived himself, or was deceived by others, or—and this last explanation is absolutely a cutting of the gordian knot—he lied."

Dr. Johnson thus gives his opinion, "There is no people, rude or learned, among whom apparitions of the dead are not related and believed. This opinion could become universal only by its truth: those that never heard of one another, would not have agreed in a tale which nothing but experience can make credible. That it is doubted by single cavillers, can little weaken the general evidence, and some who deny it with their tongues confess it by their fears."

Shenstone, speaking on this subject, says, "Persons after a debauch of liquor, or under the influence of terror, or in the deliria of a fever, or in a fit of lunacy, or even walking in their sleep, have had their brain as deeply impressed with chimerical representations, as they could have been, had these representations struck their senses; other instances may be given, where the stronger passions, either acute or cronical, have impressed their object upon the brain, and that in so lively a manner, as to leave the visionary no room to doubt of their real pre-

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sence: some of these causes might not improbably have given rise to the notion of apparitions, and when the notion had been once promulgated, it had a natural tendency to produce more instances.—Most of those who relate that these spectres have appeared to them, have been persons either deeply superstitious in other respects, of enthusiastic imaginations, or strong passions, which are the consequence, or else have allowedly felt some perturbation at the time."—Wordsworth says,

"I look for ghosts, but none will force
Their way to me; 'tis falsely said,
That there was ever intercourse
Between the living and the dead."

I might *fill* this volume with extracts from different authors who have written on this subject, as Aubrey, Wesley, Glanvil, Jarvis, Tregortha, &c. but what I have quoted are sufficient. I shall now leave the reader to form his own opinion on the subject.

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CHAPTER II.

PRESENTIMENTS, CORPSE CANDLES, &c.

"——————— Can such things be
And overcome us like a summer cloud,
Without our special wonder!"

SHAKESPEARE.

"——————— Tapers bright
With instantaneous gleam illum'd the vault of night."

BEATTIE.

THERE are many more persons found to give credence to presentiments, omens, &c. than there are to ghosts and apparitions, and instances of persons having previous knowledge of, and predicting their time of departure to a world of spirits is no uncommon thing. Mankind in general possess an innate propensity to the belief of such things, and although they may not be professed believers, *still* they feel a strange unaccountable uneasiness, and augur unpleasant circumstances from certain occurrences; as the howling of dogs, the crowing of a hen, the

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sound of the passing bell, the commencing an undertaking on Friday, hearing death watches, &c. and many instances are recorded of people being uneasy in their minds, and having strange forebodings when from home that something unpleasant had occurred, which have been found correct when they returned. What, I would ask, occasions this uneasiness?* It would appear that Providence sometimes permits these impressions to be made.

Our *grannies* (God bless 'em) in *their* time, would have esteemed an unbeliever in omens, &c. almost as bad as we do an atheist or sceptic, in our *Augustan age*; but joking apart, many brave hearts who have been accustomed to scenes of havoc and bloodshed, and looked without fear on dying friends and foes around them, have been deeply superstitious, and often entered the field with a presentiment that it was for the last time. Our brave sailors too, though they look upon a storm without dread, yet are they superstitious in the highest degree, firmly believing in prognostications, such as Mother Carey's chickens, the flying Dutchman, whistling on board, the unpropitiousness of Friday, the devil's agency in stirring up winds, &c. The Romans augured from the entrails of birds, dreams, stars, sortilage, &c. and should a bird of good omen perch on their standard, or fly over or near their army, it was esteemed favourable; on the contrary,

* There are too many instances known, which prove that all such circumstances have not been contingent.

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if a crow or raven was seen, it was deemed unlucky and they would not venture battle that day. Cæsar, and where was a braver than he? believed he should die on the day he did; but to come nearer home, we shall discover that forebodings and omens were believed by heroes and philosophers, poets and divines. The illustrious Nelson, had a strange presentiment of his death, on the day of the ever to be remembered Battle of Trafalgar; Napoleon believed the propitiousness of his star; Sheridan had an aversion to do any thing on Friday; Mozart imagined that he was composing his own requiem (which was the case) when he was composing one at the request of a stranger for a lady; Dryden predicted the accidents which befel his son, and the year of his death; Byron believed in the unpropitiousness of Friday; Henry IV. several times remarked to his friends the day before his death, "I think I shall die soon," and even the facetious and laughter-loving Swift, foretold that he should die insane, which was the case. Sir Mathew Hale also predicted the day of his death, which was verified. The ominous presage of his fortunes to Bruce, is too well known to be related. Bacon, Johnson, Walton, and many others, believed in such things; and although out of place, it may not be amiss to mention, that as Cooke the Solicitor-general was beginning to open the pleadings at the trial of Charles I. the king gently tapped him on the shoulder with his

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cane, crying "Hold! hold!" at the same time the silver head of the cane fell off and rolled on the floor.

It was a general belief formerly in Wales, that the ghost of the carpenter was heard nailing and making the coffin previously to the death of a person; that the ghost of the clergyman has been heard preaching the funeral sermon, seen to gesticulate just as it would occur, and that the ghosts of the people who attended the funeral, were seen eating and drinking;* but I imagine such seeings and hearings only extended to those possessing what is termed the Second Sight; there were many in Scotland who enjoyed this talent, and Sir W. Scott notices it in some of his works. Second Sight appears to be a faculty which is not very agreeable to those possessing it, and indeed I cannot conceive how it *can* be, to see the funerals of friends passing by before their death, when they perchance may be unprepared. Many philosophers and literary individuals have admitted that there *have* been those who have possessed this gift.

It was very prevalent in Cambria for people to see the funerals of others going to Church previous to their death; and it appears not only by the possessors of the second sight, but also by *many* others. On one occasion, a countryman was returning home about dusk with his team, near Llanpumpsaint, Carmarthenshire, when he met one of these ghostly fu-

* Who ever heard of such bon vivants among the English ghosts?

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nerals, and what appears rather singular, the fore-horse was *startled* at sight of the procession; in about a week after this, the funeral of a person who died suddenly at a farm near there, passed that way, and the same man happening to see it, declared the incorporeal and substantial funerals were precisely alike in every respect.

Another circumstance in vogue, is of a young man of Trelech, Carmarthenshire, who returning home about "the hour when spirits roam" from visiting his *cariad*, also met one of these spectral burials, and possessing a considerable share of courage followed it after it passed him, in order to see what would occur; he had not proceeded far ere he observed one of the company turn aside to accost a friendly ghost who seemed passing by, with "Well Rees *Sut yr ych chwi vachgen?* (How d'ye do boy?) in a few days after, a funeral passed by that way, and that he might ascertain whether such things were, the man followed, and confidently asserted to many, that the circumstance of the man being accosted actually took place.

About thirty years ago, there was a rumour which many of the old inhabitants of Carmarthen may recollect, of the singular appearance of three of these funerals *at noon*, near Cwmdyvran, when several people were reaping in a field not far distant, and one observing them, called out to the rest, when all, to the number of about *twelve*, beheld them for a considerable time moving along;

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in the course of the week three deaths occurred, and the three funerals passed the way where their forerunners were seen, at the same time.—These are a sort of processions that I never heard took place *any* where but in Wales.

An old man residing near Llanllwch church, Carmarthenshire, has taken his oath that he often saw these kind of funerals going to church; and one evening he had the curiosity to notice one, by peeping over the wall; most of the people in the procession he knew, but perceived some one whom he imagined a stranger, standing apart from the rest, and gazing at them: in a few days after this, there was a real funeral, so that he determined to see whether there would be any similarity between them, and went to the church-yard, but unconsciously stood on the very place where he saw the supposed stranger gazing, which it appears was no other than his own ghost: this man I am informed was favoured with the Second Sight, so that his seeing such things seems not improbable; but as to others not possessed of the gift, it is absurd for a moment to hesitate that *they* saw them. No doubt my English readers will smile at the ludicrous superstitions of their neighbours, but they must remember that their ancestors, a few centuries ago, were equally addicted to superstition.

An aged person of respectability confessed to me, that being in the country near Carmarthen one evening, she heard a strange groaning and wailing,

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as if of a man, with cries of " Oh ! oh ! *fy ngwraig, fy ngwraig*, uttered in lamentable tones, which seemed to die away towards the church; thinking it was a human voice, she took no notice of it, until being near the spot a few evenings after, she saw a funeral pass by, and heard the husband of the dead woman lamenting and crying out in the same manner as she had before heard. In Scotland the cries of the Benshi, or fairy's wife, are supposed to be heard before the death of a person, on the road where the funeral will pass.

A curious circumstance occurred at Myrtle Hill, near Carmarthen, about twenty-five years ago, which is attributed to that unaccountable agency supposed to be sometimes used previous to some disaster. A respectable family residing at the above place, while seated one evening in the parlour, were suddenly alarmed by a tremendous noise, as it were of a coach running down stairs: being as might be expected, much alarmed, they ran to ascertain the cause, when to their astonishment and surprise, nothing calculated to cause such a disturbance could be discovered; in a few minutes after a lamentable scene presented itself to their view, for their son was carried in lifeless, having accidentally fell over board and been drowned.

A servant man residing at Llewel, Breconshire, related to a particular friend of mine, that one morning very early as he chanced to be awake, with his room door and the one opposite open, he plainly

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perceived an old woman lying in a bed; well knowing that there was no old woman in the house, or bed in that room, he arose to be more certain, when the same scene presented itself to his view but soon vanished; thinking his optical nerves had deceived him, he took no more notice of it, but in the course of the year the farmer's wife's mother came to reside with her daughter, and no room in the house would please her to sleep in but that identical one, and in *that* she slept to wake no more, a few weeks after she came there: but those who were desirous of knowing whose death was to occur during the year, and fond of hearing a supernatural being, repaired to the church on All Hallow E'en, for it was believed by the ignorant peasantry, that any one who had a *penchant* to go to a certain window of the church, when

"The iron tongue of midnight had tolled twelve,"

would hear (with gravity be it spoken) that awe-inspiring being, *yclept* a ghost, repeat sentence of death upon all those who were doomed to go to their long homes that year; and I am credibly informed, that there are steps still extant outside some village churches, which are said to have been erected solely for the superstitious to go up to the window to listen. In North Wales, on this eve it was supposed that there was a ghost or goblin in every furrow or brake, so that I should imagine these unearthly visitants had a *soirée* or convention; and no wonder after being tied and bound for so long a

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period, they should be allowed *one* night in the year to view old scenes.*

Every nation has its *peculiar* superstitions, and as regards the Corpse Candles or, in Welsh, *Canwyllau cyrph*, they are universally known to be endemic (if I may use the expression) to Wales.—It appears that these lights are generally observed to veer their course towards the churchyard, which they *enter*, hover round the spot where the person whose death they intimate will be buried, and disappear; they vary in brilliancy and size, according to the person whose doom it is to leave the world; thus an infant's would not be larger than that of a candle, whilst a child's "of the larger growth" is of a proportionate size; the colour is said to be a sulphureous blue,‡ and when any one observes their approach, if they do not move aside they will be struck down by their force, as I was informed by a person living, whose father coming in contact with one, was thrown off his horse. If they are seen to stop, the corpse will do the same at the funeral; if they move aside, it will occur so at the burial; and should two candles meet, the two funerals will do the same: it is also said that if a person looks back at one after it has passed him, he will perceive the corpse and its attendants.

* The ghosts were, in olden days, imagined to have the liberty of walking on Valentine's day.

‡ Some are said to be of a red colour.

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The reason of their appearing, is generally attributed to a Bishop of St. David's, a martyr, who in olden days, whilst burning, prayed that they might be seen in Wales, (some say in his diocese only) before a person's death, that they might testify that he had died a martyr; and in many parts of North Wales, the people are almost distracted when they see them, as it is not known whose death they predict. Aubrey mentions several instances in his Miscellanies, and Tregortha also in his Invisible World.

As may be supposed, there are many fictitious tales told respecting these lights, for doubtless were a *Will o' the wisp* seen, it would instantly be set down as a Corpse Candle; but as I have conglomerated the most authentic accounts, and from those whom I can credit, the reader need not doubt their veracity, as several have been confessed solemnly to ministers, many of whom in Wales gave implicit credence to these forerunners of death.

It is said, that some years ago when the coach which runs from Llandilo to Carmarthen, was passing by Golden Grove, (the property of the noble Earl Cawdor) three corpse candles were observed on the surface of the water, gliding down the stream which runs near the road; all the passengers behold them, and it is related that a few days after, some men were crossing the river near there in a coracle, but one of them expressed his fear at venturing, as the river was flooded, and remained behind; the

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other three, possessing less discernment, ventured, and when about the middle of the river, lamentable to relate, their frail conveyance sank through the weight that was in it, and they were drowned.

One Mr. Griffith, a Baptist preacher, who lived at Pont Faen, in Pembrokeshire, asserted that in returning from Tredavith he beheld a great light which he concluded was one of these Cambrian phenomena, and accordingly waited to observe its motions; he related that he saw it stand still for about a quarter of an hour, in the road to the church of Llanferchllawdog, after which it went into the church, and after a while hovered over a spot in the churchyard. In a few days afterwards the son of a neighbour of his died, and the corpse stood precisely in the same place as he observed the light stand, as there was some water near the place, which some of the people could not pass over until others who had boots had assisted them; after this they proceeded to the churchyard, and the child was buried in the very place where the light was seen to hover.

There formerly lived in Carmarthen, an old beldam named Betty Marchant, possessed of the Second Sight, and who confessed to several that she frequently saw Corpse Candles; at one time, when she was in a house where an infant lay ill, she bade a person standing in the door to turn aside, and on being asked after, her reason for it, she stated that she perceived a candle go out at the

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door, and it is reported that the child expired that night. There is also now living in St. John's-town, near Carmarthen, an aged individual of the name of Jones, who has confidently assured a relation of mine, that she was accustomed to see these candles proceeding down the road to Llanllwch church; and that she observed that the funerals invariably took the same direction, moving aside just as she had seen their precursors, and that before any one was drowned, she has frequently seen a light float on the river.

At Cylrhedin, in the parish of Conwil, Carmarthenshire, a few merry young women determined to sit up on "All Hallow E'en," to perform some ceremony, I believe that of turning their chemises, to ascertain who should be their *Caro Sposo*, and their intention being communicated to a young man acquainted with them, he, to carry the joke on, (by the bye no joke to him, as the sequel will shew) resolved to bear them company, and placed his shirt on the line; at the expected hour, when all were on the *qui vive*, and "eager for the sight," in comes, not a male or a female, but to their great consternation, a coffin, which flew across the room and touched the shirt of the young man; as might be expected it caused him much uneasiness, but he endeavoured to persuade himself it was a dream, alas! it did not prove so, for going out one night to fetch some tobacco from a country shop, he fell over a

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wooden bridge into the river, and was discovered a corpse in the morning.

The following remarkable circumstance is related, of the late Rev. John Griffiths, of Glandwr, Carmarthenshire, whose literary attainments were well known and most highly appreciated in South Wales. Until it occurred he was a disbeliever in corpse candles and spectral funerals, and whenever an opportunity presented itself, always declaimed against the belief of those things, both in chapels and other places; but returning home on horseback one night through a narrow lane, his mare suddenly startled; not perceiving any thing he urged her on, when to his astonishment she reared aside as if frightened, but as he still could not see any thing, he 'dashed the red rowel in her side,' which he had no sooner done than she leaped over the hedge into a field; much surprised at this, he dismounted and led her into the road, and thinking if his optical could not, his auricular nerves might discover the cause, he stopped and listened, when he distinctly heard footsteps treading, as if a funeral passed; wishing to know where they would proceed to, he followed the sounds to his own chapel, where they ceased at a certain part of the burial ground attached to it; and he related that in the course of a week after this, a person was buried near the spot where the steps had ceased to be heard: after this, he discontinued ridiculing the credence given to the supernatural lights, &c.

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Another curious instance is related and firmly credited, in the neighbourhood where it occurred. A young man belonging to the farm of Llwyncrwn, near Trelech; on his road home late one night, was about crossing a gate which leads from Trelech road to a foot path through some fields, leading to the above farm, when his attention was arrested by a cart and horse, (around which were numbers of people) before him; immediately concluding it to be one of those precursors of a funeral, he felt the usual disagreeable sensations of fear, and hearing a terrific shriek behind him, soon took to his heels, arriving pretty quickly home in a state better imagined than described; the inmates shocked at his pale and wild appearance, (his hair standing *a la porcupine*, and as if he had taken a diaphoretic, the sweat dropping like rain from him,) eagerly enquired what had occurred, when he informed them what he had seen, and about half a dozen accompanied him back to the spot, but no cart or any thing being then visible, he particularly pointed out the place where he saw it, and also where the shriek seemed to proceed from; a few days after this, he and some of these men happened to be reaping in a field near the highway, and seeing a cart and numbers of horsemen, ran to the gate to see what was the matter, and perceived that it was a funeral. The relations of the deceased it seems were too poor to hire a hearse, and as the way to the churchyard lay too distant for the corpse to be borne by men, they had

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procured a cart in which they carried it, but in ascending the hill, near the gate aforesaid, one of the traces broke and they were consequently obliged to halt. The brother of the deceased, who lived at Merthyr Tydvil, had arrived from that place at the house of the latter, but finding the procession gone, he made all speed after it, and had just overtaken it, whilst they were engaged in mending the trace, and being shocked at the sight of his brother's coffin, uttered a piercing cry, which the young man declared to be exactly similar to that he had heard before.

In some parts of North Wales, a voice has been heard when the husband of a house has been quitting for immortality, saying "Y mae nenbren y ty yn craccio, fe dyr yn y maen," which implies that the main beam which supports the house is cracking and will soon fall; and just as he was expiring it would say, "Dyna fe yn torri," or "there it breaks:" a strange chirping of chickens has been also heard as people were dying, and I am acquainted with one aged person who has heard it.—It is related too, that as one Rees, a religious man, residing near Carmarthen, was leaving this world, those who were in the room heard some sweet singing as if of angels.

The following remarkable occurrence I cannot refrain from narrating, as the family in which it occurred, who now reside at Carmarthen, were far

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from being superstitious; their seeing this, will recall it to memory. As they were seated in the parlour with an invalid lying very ill on the sofa, they were much surprised at the appearance of a bird, similar in size and colour to a blackbird, which hopped into the room, went up to the female who was unwell, and after pecking on the sofa, strutted out immediately; what appears very strange, a day or two after this, the sick person died.

A bird of the same kind flew to a window as if it wished to enter the room in which a person lay ill at Penygraig, and although they endeavoured to frighten it away several times, it would not go;—*that* night the man departed this life. I have learnt of several similar instances occurring in England, and many more are related in Wales; but this bird has now, I believe, become a "*rara avis in terris.*"

One Morgan Prythrech, of Trelech, Breconshire, informed a friend of mine that he has often heard what is denominated by the Welsh, *Cwn-Amnwn*, or Gabriel's hounds, a singular cry of dogs and huntsmen, as if they were going at full speed in the air; this is something similar to the seven whistlers, so often heard of England,—more especially in Staffordshire. These flights are said to portend some great calamity.

The credulous sons of Gomer, in days of old, deemed their observing a magpie in the middle of the road unpropitious; and many have (although going upon urgent business) turned back solely

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on account of seeing one of these birds in the road; they also imagined the flight of a blackbird or crow over their houses or heads foreboded evil, which credulity seems to have been derived from the Romans. The running of a hare across the road, the crowing of a hen, the hooting of a screech owl in the day time when a person was ill, and the howling of a dog at night, called *Ci hiareth*, were esteemed inauspicious, and to portend the demise of some one; the owl seen in the day time was supposed to be

"The hateful messenger of heavy things,
Of death and dolour telling."

They have also the following adage,

"Ci dwad a chath du,
Si yn cadw'r gofid maes o'r tu."

which being translated signifies, that a strange dog that comes to your house and stays voluntarily, and a black cat, will keep away all care and trouble from the house. They deemed it as atrocious as the murder of a fellow creature to shoot a *robin*, and it was said that those who shot at one, would have the shots returned at him. If a person casually found an ash or white clover leaf with only two foils, it was thought lucky, and that if placed under their pillow at night, persons (unmarried) would dream of their intended partners for life.

In several parts of Wales it has happened that a small portion of land in a field, although ploughed and manured several times, would not produce any

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thing ; this was called *Grwn*, and was imagined to be a token of death, or of some disaster in the family to whom the farm belonged; and in some of the coal counties of Wales, there existed a superstitious belief respecting the " divining rod," cut on a particular hour, which was supposed to possess the property of discovering where coal or other mines lay concealed; strange sounds known by " knockers in mines," were said to be often heard by the miners, and were imagined also to indicate where mines lay; they were supposed to be made by a species of goblins, and like those in Staffordshire, were said to imitate the working of the labourers; indeed, in that county, these subterranean genii have often been seen and have performed kind offices for the colliers, such as drawing water in buckets and imitating their work, yet when pursued they would vanish like a flash of lightning: some say they indicate disasters, or haunt those pits only, where injustice has been carried on.

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CHAPTER III.

WITCHCRAFT, &c.

"High in air, amid the rising storm
——— ——— ——— wrapt in midnight
Her doubtful form appears and fades!
Her spirits are abroad! they do her bidding!"

"Mach.—How now you secret black and midnight hags?
what is't you do?"

SHAKESPEARE.

WHAT nation has not produced witches, warlocks, and like beings? even the most heathen and most *refined* have given birth to these delegates of the devil, and from the days of the first diviner, and originator of the Persian magi, Zoroaster, king of the Bactrians, down to the days of good king George III. of England, history informs us of the existence of these hags and wizards. The magicians and cunning men mentioned in various parts of Scripture, were nothing more or less than wizards, and although no mention I believe is made of them until the reign of Saul, there probably were, before

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that period, ladies of the broomstick. Manasses and Balaam are stated to have dealt in sorcery and enchantments; Abraham was famed for magic, as Sir Walter Raleigh says, "Qui contemplatione creaturarum cognovit creatorum;" and Socrates, Agrippa, Cagliostro, Roger Bacon, Faustus, &c. are said to have possessed familiars, who inspired them with knowledge.

Chaldæa, (where magic was first practised,) Arabia, Persia, Greece, Egypt, Rome, China, and India, have had their magicians, necromancers, wizards, oracles, Sian Szees, paw waws, &c. as well as Britain.

Some suppose Witch to be derived from the Saxon word *Wittich*, implying wit, and Brand imagines it to be from *witchelin*, the neighing or whining of a horse, because Tacitus informs us the Germans divined from the neighing of their horses.

It seems strange that wizards and witches are denoted to be ugly and hideous,* as we are inform-

* "When the Devil for weighty dispatches,
Wanted messengers cunning and bold,
He pass'd by the beautiful faces,
And pick'd out the ugly and old.
Of these he made warlocks and witches,
To run on his errands by night,
Till the over-wrought hag-ridden wretches,
Were as fit as the devil to fright.
But whoever has been his adviser,
As his kingdom increases in growth,

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ed the Sybils of old were; Merlin, Nostradamus, Nixon, Mother Lakeland, and others: "To look like a witch" is a common saying in England, and if we may infer from the case of Mother Shipton, their business converts them into ugly creatures.—Witches, that is the unsophisticated breed, are those who are supposed to give information of future events, raise departed spirits, and occasionally his serene lowness the devil, who can command any thing by their agency, give informatiou where any lost article is to be found, and at whose bidding people are bewitched, being possessed of an inward irresistible influence to dance and tumble about; old Mothers Shipton and Lakeland, of English memory, had great propensities to carry on these sort of jokes with those who did not please them. The ceremony of initiating these "oracles of human destiny" is very singular, and is given in the 12th vol. of the Mirror, p. 71. Beelzebub, Baal, Mooned Ashtaroth, Agares, Marbas, and

He now takes his measures much wiser,
And traffics with beauty and youth.
Disguis'd in the wanton and witty,
He haunts both the church and the court;
And sometimes he visits the city,
Where all the best Christians resort.
Thus dress'd up in full masquerade,
He the bolder can rage up and down;
For he better can drive on his trade,
In any one's name than his own."

History of the Devil

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several other demons assuming the different titles of kings, dukes, marquisses, &c. were devoted exclusively to their service, and had each a legion of 6,666 devils at their beck! Reginald Scott in his work, book 15th, chap. 2, gives a list of these infernal forces, and a "full, true, and particular account" of the periods when they were to be invoked, with the prayers used, forms of adjuring, citing them, &c.

It appears that these fiends were very obsequious to their commands, as we find from the story of the devil carrying a witch over the brook, and being compelled to build Crowland Abbey, because he had disturbed the workmen in laying the foundation; also the demon who constructed the ditch, called after him the Devil's Ditch, bordering upon Suffolk and Essex; and (as some say) a devil who brought the stones out of *Wales* to build Stonehenge.

It was generally supposed that these witches, &c. sold their souls to the devil, signing the agreement with their own blood, and at the expiration of the lease, the latter was very punctual in his demand, taking them by force, house and all, if they were obstinate; as the cases of Dr. Faustus, the two men of Salisbury, and others, will demonstrate.

In order to take voyages to the aerial regions, (in which voyages they outvied all our aeronauts,) they used dead bodies, which they seethed in a cauldron, and the ointment so produced, with some ceremonies best known to themselves, enabled

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them to stride the broom, and to be off *dans un clin d' œil*, to regions unkenn'd. To drive bad spirits away, they used fumigations, and it is well known that the Romans burnt sulphur to drive the evil ones; we have also an account in Tobit, of the flight of a demon, occasioned by the burnt liver of a fish; and among the methods used to *raise* the devil or his imps, were those of making a circle and dancing in it, pronouncing at the same time some mysterious words, and repeating the Lord's prayer backwards; casting figures; using a skull, or (as Lilly says) a beryl engraven with hieroglyphics.—Familiars were also indispensable appendages to witches, and were supposed to appear as dogs, cats, &c. some in human shapes, conversing with voices as if they were men, according to the confession of Mother Lakeland, who had three familiars attending her as two dogs and a mole; and we have accounts in Scripture of familiar spirits, both in the Old and New Testaments.

" ——————————— I am shunned
And hated like a sickness—made a scorn
To all degrees and sexes, I have heard old beldames
Talk of familiars in the shape of mice,
Rats, ferrets, weasels, and I wot not what,
That have appear'd and suck'd, (some say) their blood."

Witch of Edmonton.

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The antients had a sort of divination, styled *Sortes Prenestinæ*, *Sortes Homerianæ*, &c. which was a method of searching into futurity similar to that which the Classical Journal mentions, as being practised in the early ages of Christianity, termed the *Sortes Sanctorum*,—opening the Scriptures, and deducing from the first words that presented themselves to their view, their future destiny. The Scriptures mention a spirit of divination, Acts 16, 16, and previous to their oracles, the Romans and Greeks practised the *Sortes*, and some instances of the fulfilment of these predictions are given in the Encyclopædia Britannica, vol. 19, p. 475.—The Jews had too, what is termed, the *Bath Kol*, and it is related of *Wesley*, that he always determined what he was to do when in difficulty, by opening the Bible and obeying what he considered to be the meaning of the first text his eye fell upon.

The Chaldæans divided the "slaves of the devil," into five classes, viz. Chascedin, or Chaldæans,—astronomers; Asaphim, or magicians; Chatumin, or interpreters of dreams and enchantments; Mecasphim, or witches; and Gazarim, or augurs and diviners; and it seems that sorcery, witchcraft, conjuration, and chiromancy were different branches, practised severally in modern times; thus we had those who told fortunes by palmistry, the hieroglyphical characters of coffee grounds or tea leaves, and the stars, denominated fortune-tellers: those who were in compact with

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the devil, sold charms, conversed with those of an invisible world, and conjured, called necromancers and black witches; others who dived into the secrets of futurity, &c.—seers; and lastly, those who ascertained where any thing lost could be discovered, told the state of departed friends, cured diseases inflicted by witches, and recovered stolen goods, styled white witches, and the innate proneness, and inclination of people, (not content with that

"Blindness to the future wisely given,
That none might know the secrets hid by heav'n,")

To have an intimation of what would occur in the course of their lives, or what would be their destiny, seems to have contributed greatly to augment the number of the sisterhood, and to produce spurious delegates of his Satanic majesty; and it was these credulous and superstitious persons who supported the pillars which held witchcraft up so long; but these pillars have tottered, and left not a wreck behind; for the severity of the laws, and the ducking of witches, many of whom were innocent of crimes imputed to them, acted like a "besom of destruction," and swept away these imps of the gentleman with the long tail and cloven foot, from this *now* enlightened portion of the globe.

[By statute 33, Henry VIII. c. 8, it is enacted, that all witchcraft and sorcery be felony, without

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benefit of clergy; and by statute I, James I. c. 12, all persons invoking any evil spirit, or consulting, covenanting with, entertaining, employing, feeding, or rewarding any evil spirit, or taking up dead bodies from their graves to be used in any witchcraft, sorcery, charm, or enchantment, or killing or otherwise hurting any person by such infernal acts, should be guilty of felony without benefit of clergy, and suffer death. And if any person should attempt by sorcery to discover hidden treasure, or to restore stolen goods, or to provoke unlawful love, or to hurt any man or beast, though the same were not effected, he or she should suffer imprisonment and pillory for the first offence and death for the second. But these laws are not now in force, for by statute 9, George II. c. 5, it is enacted, that no persecution shall for the future be carried on against any person for conjuration, witchcraft, sorcery, or enchantment." But all persons pretending to act as sorcerers, &c. are punished for the misdemeanour with a year's imprisonment, and standing in the pillory. Sorcerers, &c. are also condemned by the laws of God, and are by them excluded from the kingdom of Heaven; and it certainly is censurable for people to encourage them, by being informed of their destiny.—"Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." "Barrington does not hesitate to estimate the number of those put to death in England, on the charge of witchcraft, &c. at 30,000!" For. Quart. Rev.

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Hopkins the witch-finder's havoc among the old Lincolnshire women is well known.]

The Roman sybils appear to have been a higher class of witches, and to have been more familiar with their august and venerable parent than their modern sisters, for I never read of their delighting in such feats as broomstick riding, or Metra-like assuming any form their inclination might choose; they seem to have scorned these things and to have devoted their time to writing prophecies, &c.

But their race has been run,
And their feats are all done,
We now hear no more of like evils,
For brave W————'s name,
His pow'r and great fame,
Has frighten'd both them and the d——s.

Nearly every village in Wales formerly had its witch or cunning man, as those of Scotland had their seers, which were esteemed, consulted and revered as much as the oracle of Delphi, or others, were by the Romans or Greeks; and what increased the number of these beings, was the custom of the ignorant country people to sacrifice their children to the devil in order to make them wizards; the mode of doing this is thus given by Rev. Rees Pritchard, formerly vicar of Llandovery, in a hymn against conjurors;—

"Tynna'r plentyn trwy bren crweca,
Neu trwy'r fflam ar nos g'langaua,

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A'u rhoi ymhinn y felyn uchel,
Yw offrymmu plant i gythrel."

which implies, that dragging children through a hoop or through the flame of a fire, on All Hallow E'en, and taking them to the mill binn to be shook, is the manner of sacrificing them to his diabolical reverence. May not the saying of "Go to the devil and shake yourself," have its derivation from this?—The devoted person sacrificed by the Caledonians to Baal, we are informed was compelled to leap through the flames of a fire.

Most of you may have heard of the extraordinary deeds of the broom ladies of England, "sich" as riding on the devil's back up in the air, going to feasts of his preparation, and the like; but as you may not have heard of the feats of the *gwragedd o berchen ysbrydion dewiniaeth* of Cwmry, I shall now relate some of them, by no means less wonderful than those of their relatives of other countries, and indeet py St. Taffy ant the leek, it is a fery goot jop that the race of witches is extinct, for perhaps indeet they would pe for pewitching hur for writing apout them, but as it is, hur can now *rhodio* in the dark, singing *Ar hyd y nos*, or Ap Shenkin, without peing disturbed by them or the hop-goplins.

Who has not heard of the celebrated Welsh astrologer or wizard, Merlin? whose fame from the days of "good King Arthur," to the present day has been so great, and who that has travelled through the picturesque and delightful scenery of

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Carmarthen, has not heard of Merlin's Cave and Grove, or his seat, which still remains, and is hewn out of a rock, surrounded by the luxuriant grove? here it is said he wrote those predictions which caused his name to be so revered, and studied the motions of the Heavenly bodies, from which the literati suppose he derived the knowledge of future events.

This seat, cave, and grove, are situated near a small village called Abergwilly, about two miles from Carmarthen, in which the Bishop of St. David's has a very fine palace; the cave is reported to be a subterranean passage, leading to regions unkenn'd, and is viewed even now* by the peasantry with awe. Spencer, book 3, canto 3, has the following stanzas respecting the cave:

"To Maridaunum, that is now, by change
Of name, Cayr Merdyn called, they took their way,
There the wise Merlyn whilom wont they say,
To make his wonne low underneath the ground,
In a deep delve, far from the view of day,
That of no living wight he mote be found,
When so he counselled, with his sprights encompast round.

And if thou ever happen that same way
To travel, go to see that dreadful place,

* At least about four years ago I might say, with Virgil,
"Jam tum religio pavidos terrebat agrestes
Dira loci: jam tum sylvam saxumque timebant."

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It is a hideous, hollow, cave like bay
Under a rock, that lies a little space
From the swift Barry, tumbling down apace,
Emongst the woody hills of Dinevawr:
But dare thou not, I charge, in any case
To enter into that same baleful bower,
For fear the cruel fiends should thee unawares devour.

But standing high aloft, low lay thine ear;
And there such ghastly noise of iron chains,
And brazen caudrons thou shalt rombling hear,
Which thousand sprights with long enduring pains
Do toss, that it will stun thy feeble brains.
And often times great groans and grievous stounds,
When too huge toil, and labour them constrains,
And oftentimes loud strokes, and ringing sounds,
From under that deep rock most horribly rebounds.

The accounts of the birth of this singular individual are fabulous, some affirming that he was begotten by the devil, and others that his mother, a nun of royal blood, dreamt that a young man lay with her, after which she conceived and begat Merlin; but according to Mr. H. Llhuyd, there were two Merlins, one styled *Merddyn Wyllt*, so called from his poetry being so enthusiastic, born in Scotland, and the other of whom we are speaking, *Merddyn Emrys*, born in Carmarthen; and as instances of the superstition of olden times, and the attention paid to predictions, I shall quote the fol-

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lowing.* "As Cadwalader was going to embark from Britain for Wales, when the Saxons were making inroads into his territory, he was warned in a vision, which he imagined to be a sudden impulse from heaven, directed to lay aside the cares of the world, and to go immediately to Rome, to receive holy orders from the hands of the Pope; having communicated this to the king of Bretaigne, the latter consulted the prophetic books of the two Merlins, which were deemed as sacred as the pages of the Roman Sybils, and informed him that they predicted the ruin of the British empire, until the bones of king Cadwalader should be brought back from Rome. Cadwalader according to this advice proceeded directly to Rome." And speaking of the successful event of a battle of the Welsh, Mr. Warrington says, "Their hopes began to revive and their views to extend, which were heightened still more by a prophecy of Merlin, long cherished among the Welsh, that Llewelyn should one day wield the sceptre of Brutus, the supposed founder of the empire. It is possible too that the Welsh prince himself might indulge the same hopes from a like delusive source, the prediction of a soothsayer. When he first began the revolt, he consulted an aged woman, who was a reputed prophetess, respecting the issue of the war, who advised him to pursue the enterprize with spirit, and assured him that in the event he would ride through Cheapside with a crown upon his

* Warr. His. of Wales, book 3, p 139.

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head." Upon his death his head was brought to London, and ornamented with a silver circle was placed upon the pillory of Cheapside, by order of the English monarch Edward, in ridicule of the prophecies.

Thus we perceive that this curious character, (Merlin) was revered by the Britons with a veneration and respect, amounting to little less than adoration, but that day is past, and those to whom it gave birth; yet a Welshman still feels proud of his country having produced such a renowned and discreet individual. The other cave of his, within which *was* his figure in wax, is in a labyrinth at Richmond, and for an accurate engraving of it, I refer my readers to vol. 15, number 422, of that highly interesting and popular work, "The Mirror." His prophecies are very numerous, and it is much to be regretted that they are not now in print, as many of them have been verified. The following is his prediction respecting the intended invasion of Napoleon, and the small force of Lord Cawdor's, which went to oppose the French, when they landed in Pembrokeshire;—

"Ceir gweled llong ar gefn purwin,
Yn dôd y Frydain fawr,
Fe ddaw yr cath a'r wenci,
Ar hyd lan Towy lawr."

The following, as near as I can give it, is the translation;—

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You'l see a ship upon the sea,
Coming to Britain Great;
There 'l come the cat and weasel
Down Towy's side in state.

I am informed that he has foretold the inundation of Carmarthen, which I hope will not be accomplished.

We learn from the history of "King Arthur and his knights," that being allured by *beauty*, he was doomed to be an eternal prisoner to the Lady of the Lake.

According to Shakespeare, the famous Owen Glendower was an adept in "raising spirits from the vasty deep," and performing equally extraordinary deeds; and Giraldus relates, that there were among the Welsh certain persons whom they called *Awenhydhion*, a word expressive of poetical raptures. These persons, when consulted about any thing doubtful, inflamed with a high degree of enthusiasm, were, to all appearance, carried out of themselves, and seemed as if they were possessed by an invisible spirit. Yet they did not immediately declare a solution of the difficulty required, but by the power of wild and inconsistent circumlocution, in which they abounded, any person who observed the answer, would at length by some turn or digression in the speech, receive, or fancy that he did, an explanation of what he sought. From this state of ecstacy they were at last roused, as from a deep sleep, and were compelled, as it were, by the vio-

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lence of others, to return to their natural state, and if it happened that they were again consulted about the same or any other thing, they would be certain to express themselves in other and far different words. This property was bestowed upon them as they fancied, in their sleep; at which time it appeared to some of them as if new milk and honey was being poured into their mouths; to others as if a written scroll had been put into their mouths, and on awaking, they publicly professed that they had been endowed with these extraordinary gifts. The same author also relates that an individual who resided at Caerleon, named Maelor, lived about the year 1100, and was esteemed as a conjuror; that he could inform any one where stolen property could be found, and had a knowledge of future events, which came to him in the following singular manner: as he was one night waiting for his *chere amie* in a sequestered grove, there appeared unto him a meagre, ugly, and hairy figure, something like the one which appeared to Brutus, and which so terrified the poor man, that he lost his senses for many days, but by praying for the intercession of St. David, and other saints, at church, he was restored to his right mind; from that period great friendship subsisted between him and evil spirits, for he not only had the power of seeing, but of knowing them and their names, and often conversed with them; they always appeared he said, as men with hunting horns slung across their

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shoulders, and he could ascertain a wicked and false person immediately, by seeing the devils jumping and capering about him; so that he discovered the evil from the good, and although he could not read, whenever he saw a book he could ascertain whether it was immoral, point but any falsehood in it with his finger, and being questioned how he could tell such things, he confessed that the devil acquainted him. Such a person would be very desirable now-a-days.

I am informed that there was a necromancer almost as renowned as Merlin, in North Wales, and it is related that two young men returning from that *delightful* avocation—courting, and being so well pleased with the reception they had met with, thought to wind up all by having what is termed a *lark*; accordingly they pulled the gates of two corn fields away belonging (though unknown to them) to the wizard, and drove the cattle in an adjoining meadow into them; they had no sooner done this, and were proceeding homewards, than they felt a ponderous weight attached to their backs, for the conjuror had caused the gates to adhere to them. They essayed to enter their abode, and by every method endeavoured to rid themselves of their unwelcomed burden, but it was of no avail, for the gates stuck to each closer than a brother. Being advised to go back, to beg the offended person's pardon, and replace the gates, they went, and were

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by imploring his mercy disencumbered of their load. —There is a very interesting account of Davy Sion Evan, of North Wallian breed, related in the Cambrian Quarterly Mag. vol. 1,—a work which it is the duty of every Welshman to support.

In Pembrokeshire there was a person commonly known as the cunning man of Pentregethen, who sold winds to the sailors, after the manner of the Lapland witches, and who was reverenced in the neighbourhood in which he dwelt, much more than the divines; he could ascertain the state of absent friends, and performed all the wonderful actions ascribed to conjurors; one David Lloyd ap Llewelyn, of the same county, is said to have been a great prophet, and his prophecy that a chieftain of Wales should liberate the nation from Saxon bondage, a writer remarks, "so wrought upon the valour of his countrymen, that many thousands enlisted under the banner of Sir Rhys ap Thomas, who received Richmond at Milford."

There dwelt in a farm called Eithin-duon, in the parish of Trelech, Carmarthenshire, one David Lewis, who with his family were celebrated as conjurors, and were said to be able fairy-like to pass through key-holes, The ale in the cellars of the neighbours was observed to be soon gone, but none could ascertain the cause, as the people of the house had certainly not consumed it so soon, and the victuals, &c. placed secure at night, were found to have made their exit in the morning; but one morn-

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ing a grand-daughter of the said conjuror, and novice in the black art was discovered in a cellar, and the mystery unravelled: it seems she had, like the brother of Ali Baba, forgot the mystical words and could not escape, for Sessima would not open to her. Sometimes cows were found to give no milk, and to be sticking in the hedges, which was attributed to the conjuring family, and it is said that a sister of this David Lewis, whose husband kept a farm, and one day sent a lad for some lime,* observed to him about mid-day, that the lad was an awkward, clumsy fellow, and soon after unthinkingly clapped her hands, exclaiming, "the fool, he has overturned it." As he had heard she possessed some knowledge of the cabalistical art, he observed the time, and enquired her meaning, but being ashamed she turned the subject and went out. The lad being much longer than usual, her husband went to meet him, and desiring him to tell the truth, asked if he had overturned the cart, upon which he confessed it, and told the time, which corresponded exactly to that when she had exclaimed as above.

Now for the weird ladies, who to their credit be it spoken, were not so cruel as the English dames, who murdered many people, as we are informed. There is a story current in Carmarthen, that a young man passing by the river Tivy one night, saw several ladies *wen* (white) or witches,

* The distance from there would be about 16 miles.

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sailing across the river in cockle shells; gazing earnestly as well he might upon such a strange and unusual sight, he beheld one among the assembly whom he knew, and accosted her with "O it is you, is it? I'll tell of you." "Tell when you recollect," was the reply; he went immediately home with the intention of doing so, and often met afterwards with this *devines* (witch), but the circumstance *never* occurred to his memory, until he was on his death bed, as he then affirmed. Another old lady, videlicet a witch, called Mary Gorse, lived near Carmarthen, in a state bordering upon mendicity, and was accustomed occasionally to go round to seek alms, and once being refused by Mr. Thomas, of Penlan, in a few minutes after her departure, a sow and pigs belonging to him, were observed on the roof of the house, and every endeavour to get them off proved abortive, until her ladyship was desired to release them from their perilous situation; so that after this occurrence became known few persons refused her a trifle, for fear of her maledictions or extraordinary power.—There was also a sister of Cardigan breed, of whom report speaks, that bearing animosity against a farmer who was a great sportsman, as she one day observed him going to course, saying to her little grand daughter who resided with her, "I'll give them a chase now," she metamorphosed herself into a hare, and started off: but the courser soon observed puss, and calling out * "Hw y ci du."

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(now black dog), and the grand child "Hw mamgu" (now grandmother), the chase became general, but old mamgu proved to have had the lightest foot, for after giving them a good chase, and fatiguing them as long as her inclination pleased, she ran into her house and assumed her wonted "questionable shape."* Another of these slaves of "the prince of the air," was said to exist near Haverfordwest, to the no small terror of the farmers and peasantry, and had the gift of acquainting them of the future transactions of their life, and receptacle of any thing "stolen or strayed;" she would punish those whom she disliked, by causing every thing to go upside down with them, and often transmuting herself into a black cat, would haunt the houses of those with whom she was not on amicable terms, and it is said that

"Oft when Eve had spread her dusky veil,
And hid each star that's wont to cheer the night,

In some deep glen remote from human sight, she would resort to her associates, where

'Fantastic shapes and direful shadows throng'd'
"At the thrilling verse and charmed spell."

I am informed also that there dwelt in a Pembrokeshire village, an old woman commonly known as a *gwraig hyspys*, and amongst other remarkable transactions of her's, the following was credited. A heedless youth passing by her garden in which was

* Sir W. Scott relates a similar instance in his "Witchcraft."

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some very fine apple trees, and it being very hot, was tempted to take by force what he imagined he could not obtain by words; but the old hag soon discovered the young offender, and caused an evil eye to rest upon him, for he was continually ailing, until his mother restored the remainder of the fruit which had not been eaten, and obtained her forgiveness, after which he recovered instantly.—But the days of ghosts, witches, and like "horrible imaginings" are gone by, for

"In the deep windings of the grove, no more
The hag obscene, and griesly phantom dwell,
Nor in the fall of mountain stream or roar
Of winds is heard the angry spirit's yell;
No wizard mutters the tremendous spell,
Nor sinks convulsive in prophetic swoon,
Nor bids the noise of drums and trumpets swell,
To ease of fancied pangs the lab'ring moon,
Or chase the shade that blots the blazing orb of noon."

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CHAPTER IV.

TRADITIONS & FAIRY TALES.

"——————Oft Fairy elves,
Whose midnight revels by a Forest side
Or fountain, some belated peasant sees,
Or dreams he sees while o'er head the moon
Sits arbitress and nearer to the earth
Wheels her pale course, they in their mirth and dance,
Intent with jocund music charm his ear;
At once with joy and fear his heart rebounds."

MILTON.

"To haunted stream ——————————
Where fays of yore their revels wont to keep."

BEATTIE.

TRADITIONS, it is pretty generally known, are relics of heathenism or popish superstition. Most nations have their traditions and legends, many of which are so absurd and ridiculous, that even a schoolboy would intuitively distinguish them as idle and fictitious tales without sense or reason.—A proof that these legends are most of them popish blarney, may be seen from the accounts related of

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the saints, for instance of St. Patrick (a Cymro), of whom it is said, that he made a rousing fire with ice, and that fire dropped from his fingers, drying up the waters of a deluge; that he transported a leper to Ireland upon an altar stone; and that he himself effected his landing there from *Wales*, in the face of an army of devils sent to oppose him; that he made the earth swallow magicians and demons, and that by his faith he removed mountains; also that he made a goat bleat in the belly of the man who had stolen and eaten it, and entailed a goat's beard upon the issue of the thief for ever, (it is hoped he did not extend it to the female line), and that when he walked out in the dark, his own fingers afforded him light, serving all the purposes of a lantern.—Fenton in his History of Pembrokeshire, thus accounts for St. Patrick's leaving the land o'leeks, for the land o'blunders; "St. Patrick, who was a Welshman, became enamoured of the secluded situation of a vale called Vallis Rosina, on the Irish Sea, and intending to dwell there, vowed to devote himself to the service of God, but was warned by a vision not to fix his heart upon that retired spot, for that he, St. P., was reserved for a more glorious employment, in a country that was a stranger to the word of Life, and which he was destined to convert." This was it appears his motive for leaving his native land; and it may not be irrelevant to mention, that in the ancient church of Sarum is the following collect, in which Mr. Llew-

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elyn, in his notes to "the Land beneath the Sea," says the above prophecy was pointed at, "Oh God who by an angel didst foretel thy blessed confessor, St. David, thirty years before he was born, grant unto us, we beseech thee, that celebrating his memory, we may, by his intercession, attain to joys everlasting."

Various are the wells denominated Holy in Wales, the most renowned of which are, St. Winifred's. St. Anthony's, St. Tegla's, St. Dwynwen's, and those of Towyn and Llandrindod;* these were imagined to possess as miraculous efficacies, as the pools of Bethsaida and Siloam, and many have been the pilgrimages to that of St. Winifred, which seems to have been held the highest in estimation; but now that "the schoolmaster has been abroad," excepting a few superstitious females, none pay any regard to St. Winifred's relic, or the fiction respecting it. Giraldus relates, that in his time sins were pardoned for money at the well, to every pilgrim, who had a slip of paper given him as a certificate for it; and if a wealthy individual came and presented a large sum, he would obtain absolution for *future* offences. Tradition relates that Winifred, or Gwenfrewy, was the beautiful daughter of Temic ap Elwedd, who being on a certain day in the year 630, at home by herself, (her parents being at church hearing St. Benno deliver "the

* See the legend respecting this latter, in the Cambrian Quarterly Mag. vol. I.

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glad tidings of the Gospel,") Caradoc, the lord of the land, passing by, became enamoured of her beauty, and was proceeding to take improper liberties with her, when she fortunately escaped from him and proceeded towards the church, where she had not arrived before he overtook her, and severed her head from her body with his sword; her head bouncing into the church, St. Beuno took it up and fastening it on again she recovered, but in the place where the blood was shed, there flowed a well, which to this day is called St. Winifred's well.—The legend says, Caradoc dropt down dead near the spot where he committed the horrid act, and was taken by the devil; Winifred lived fifteen years after, the greatest part of which time was spent in the monastery at Gwythern, Denbighshire, of which she was abbess. Pennant relates that there was a bell belonging to the church aforesaid, which was christened with the usual ceremonies, in honour of St. Winifred: "on the ceremony," he continues, "they all laid hold of the rope, bestowed a name on the bell, and the priest sprinkling it with holy water, baptised it in the name of the Trinity. He then clothed it with a fine garment, after which the gossips gave a grand feast, and made great presents, which the priests received, in behalf of the bell.—Thus blessed, it was endowed with great powers; allayed on being rung all storms, diverted the thunderbolt, and drove away the devil." The well is situated in Flintshire, and the people relate

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that many miraculous cures have been performed by it, and that no animal can be drowned in it.—The spring is supposed to be one of the finest in Britain, and is said to fling 21 tons of water in a minute; after a violent fall of wet, it becomes discoloured by a wheyish tinge, and what appears singular, it never freezes or scarcely varies in the quantity of water in droughts or after rain; this the peasants attribute to a supernatural power. King James II. paid a visit to the well in 1686, and was rewarded for it by a present of the chemise in which his great grandmother Mary Stuart lost her head. Mr. Cotton, in his Voyage to Ireland, thus describes this well:—

"But the fountain in truth is well worth the sight,
The beautiful virgin's own tears not more bright;
Nay, none but she ever shed such a tear,
Her conscience, her name, nor herself were more clear:
In the bottom there lie certain stones that look white,
But streak'd with pure red, as the morning with light,
Which they say is her blood, and so it may be,
But for that, let who shed it, look to it for me.
Over the fountain a chapel there stands,
Which I wonder has scap'd master Oliver's hands;
The floor's not ill pav'd, and the margent o' th' spring,

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Is enclos'd with a certain octagonal ring;
From each angle of which a pillar does rise;
Of strength and of thickness enough to suffice
To support and uphold from falling to ground
A cupola wherewith the virgin is crown'd.
Now 'twixt the two angles that fork to the north,
And where the cold nymph does her bason pour forth,
Under ground is a place, where they bathe as 'tis said,
And 'tis true, for I heard folks teeth 'hack in their head.'"

It is related in Merionethshire, that there formerly stood in Nannau Park, (the property of Sir R. Vaughan, Bt. M. P.) an old oak which was blasted, as the credulous affirmed, by evil spirits; and it is reported that in days of yore, a huge giant was discovered in the tree, grasping a ponderous sword and shield; the tree I am told is not now standing, but was supposed to have been blown down by the *ysbrydion*, (spirits) and the place is still viewed with dread by the superstitious peasantry.

As you probably may not have heard of the Lady wen and lake of Llyn gwyn, in Glamorganshire, I will now relate it, of course its veracity will not be doubted for a moment. It has been a long, aye very long time ago now, since St. Patrick of Ireland, came over on a visit just to say "*Sut yr y chwi?*" ("How d'ye do?") to St. David of

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Wales, and as they were passing by this lake, conversing as good saints should do, upon religious topics, some of the irritated Welsh having ascertained that it was St. Patrick, and being not at all pleased with his leaving Cambria for the Isle of Erin, began to pour imprecations &c. on the saint; but this gross insult could not be expected to go unretaliated, so his holiness caused them to be transmogrified into fishes; but one of the offenders being a female, (Cambrian manners were not very refined at that time of day I presume), and a friend of our saint, he (St. P.) converted her into a lady wen, to be a sort of presiding goddess over the lake, and she has oft been seen

"When darkness with her pinions black,
Did wrap the world in shade,"

clad in the prevalent garb of ghosts (white), and sometimes accompanied with flashes of light which illumined the surrounding places. It was said that the sun, on account of the insult offered to the holy man, never shed its vivifying rays upon the dark and picturesque lake, but one week during the year, so that these poor fishes would not be likely to sweat, (as it is related their brethren once did,) and cry "O dear how hot we shall be."

There are many miraculous exploits attributed to one John of Kent, who was said to be a powerful necromancer, residing in Monmouthshire; he is said to have made a compact with the devil, whom

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he often outwitted and *fairly** cheated, during his life and at his death. Whilst holding the situation of farmer's boy, he is related to have confined a number of crows, which he was appointed to keep from the corn, in an old roofless barn, whilst he visited Grosmont fair; and wonderful to say, his spell was so efficacious, that when he returned they were every one there, for none had tried to escape. He is said also to have built in a night, through the medium of one of his familiar spirits, the bridge which still bears his name, leading to Grosmont, over the Munnow. Kentchurch house, the seat of the Scudamore family, where he was hired as a servant, became the seat of his marvellous exploits.—An old tombstone in the church-yard, close to the chancel wall, is said to cover his body, as he was interred under the wall to evade the compact which stipulated, that if he was buried either in or out of the church, he should become the property of Satan.

The following legend relative to St. David, is extracted from an old work (1694) entitled "A correct Historie of the Seven Championes." "St. David behaved himself so bravelie at the court of the count Palantine, that he made him his companion, and on a festivall, there being tilts and tournamentes, and St. David being a champione he entered firste, and the count's son, ambitious of honour, went to answer him, and at the first was like to have worsted

* "Fallere fallentem non est fraus."

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St. David, but the next encounter the latter felled both man and horse to the ground and killed them. This so enraged the count, that he contrived to destroie him, but could not effect it; whereupon he sent him to bring an enchanter's head, called Ormonden, and St. David went to a rock where he found a sword fast, which he strove to move, but not being able, he fell down and slept for seven years, until St. George wandering near the enchanted garden, and seeing St. David asleep and a sword stuck in a rock, he gave it a pull, when out it came and immediately the enchantment was broke and he awaked." According to the same book, our Saint appears to have been a favourite with St. George, as he appointed him Commander in general in his absence.

In Pembrokeshire, there is a famous tradition of which Giraldus makes mention in his work, respecting a stone, supposed to be miraculous, and denominated *Llechlaver*, or the speaking stone.—It is a fine marble stone under which the river Alyn runs, and is used as a substitute for a bridge; it was said that whenever a dead body was borne over it, it invariably spoke; but in one of its efforts, by over straining, it cracked; the crevice is still to be seen: when Henry II. after his return from Ireland, was proceeding to pay his devotions at the shrine of St. David, a Welsh woman fell down at his feet, and complained about the bishop of the

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diocese, but his majesty not paying much attention to her, she exclaimed with vehement gesticulations, "Avenge us this day Llechlaver, avenge us and the nation in this man," referring to a prophecy of Merlin's, that a king of England and conqueror of Ireland should be wounded by a person with a red hand, and die upon Llechlaver on his return through St. David's:—it is needless to add that this event did not take place.

Behold yon dark and extensive lake, whose waters seem as tranquil as if they were hushed to sleep by the soothing voice of the floating zephyr, save where that yellow* little river runs, that disdains as it were to mix its purer stream with that of the unhallowed Llyn, (lake) for it is supposed to carry no more water out than it brought in; do you ask why? know that *Llyn Savadhan* is a curtain o'er a scene, a lesson unto man, and *was* the winding sheet of many a fair corse. The silvery strains of the *telyn* (harp) have oft been heard in that spot, and the laughing voice of the fair, with the loud shouts of drunkenness and revelry, have often filled the surrounding air; but that day is past and forgotten, with those who beheld its light. According to tradition, there stood a palace, some say a town, on the spot now occupied by the lake, the Arglwydd (lord) of which, was a dissipated and sacrilegious man, and had extorted most of his riches

* "Of amber bright hue its streams." Llewellyn.

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from the poor peasantry. Leading a most abandoned and wicked life, he cared for nothing but the pleasures and enjoyments of the world, and although a voice was said to have been often heard to warn him, yet, unlike Belshazzar, with a demoniac laugh as it were, he scorned it. He had one evening summoned two bards from the neighbourhood, to play at a feast he intended to make; they obeyed, and found on their arrival numbers of gallant youths, with their fair partners, ready to commence the dance. They were merry and laughed, for they had quaffed the bright *medd* (mead) in such potations, that all hearts were glad, and none cared what they said or did; but when the midnight bell had tolled the solemn hour, and they had suspended the dance to partake of their vivifying nectar, a loud clap of thunder, (far louder than the terrible noise which the lake makes when its ice cracks,*) shook the foundation of the palace, and laid its proud portals low. The revellers were much alarmed, for a voice was heard to say, "Vengeance is come," and the minstrels looking whence the voice seemed to proceed, perceived a hand beckoning them to follow; they obeyed and followed their phantom guide to some distance from the palace, when it suddenly disappeared, and at the same time a noise like that of the sea beating against the lapidific shore, and

* Gira'dus calls it "Clamosum" from this circumstance.

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loud screams like those of despair came over their ears, filling them with dismay; on their looking back towards the palace, behold it had disappeared and an expanse of waters lay bubbling on the spot where it had stood. It was imagined that the wickedness of the proud lord and his company, had called forth the vengeance of the Almighty, so that the lake was ever after regarded with a superstitious eye: this is the reason assigned, that the superstitious little river Lewenny will not mix its water with that of the lake.

Near a farm called Disgwilfa, about twelve miles from Carmarthen, a white stone about the size of a man's head was discovered, which was said to have the singular property of arresting the progress of hydrophobia; many people, it is said, after being bitten by a rabid animal, and taking a few grains of this antidote, which was a soft substance, and was usually scraped with a knife by the farmer in whose possession it was, have never experienced any effects of poison; and about forty years ago a woman who had tasted some of this miraculous stone, related to a friend of mine, that as soon as she had swallowed it, she experienced an extraordinary and almost indescribable sensation, as if her blood was boiling in her veins. This stone was imagined to have fallen from the sky, *pro bono publico*, but it has now disappeared like many other good and wonderful things of old.

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In Cardiganshire there is a lake, beneath which it is reported that a town lies buried; and in an arid summer, when the water is low, a wall on which people may walk, extending across the lake is seen, and supposed to appertain to the inundated city or town; on one side is a gigantic rock, which appears to have been split, as there is a very extensive opening in it, which nearly divides it in twain, and which tradition relates was thus occasioned:—"once upon a time" there was a person of the name of Pannog, who had two oxen, so large that their like was never known in any part of the world, and of whom it might be said,

"They ne'er will look upon their like again".

It chanced one day that one of them, (and it appears that they were not endued with a quantum of sense proportionate to their bulk) was grazing near a precipice opposite the rock, and whether it was his desire to commit suicide, or to cool his body by laving in the lake below, one knows not, but certain it is that down he plunged, and was never seen more: his partner searching for him a short time after, and not perceiving any signs of his approach, bellowed almost as loud as the Father of the Gods, who when he spake "Earth to his centre shook;" however, the sound of his bleating split the opposite rock, which from the circumstance is called *Uchain Pannog*, (Pannog's oxen.) These oxen were said to be two persons, called in Wales, Nyniaf and

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Phebiaf, whom God turned into beasts for their sins.

Trichrug, a mountain of Cardiganshire, so called from three small mountains being connected with it, was celebrated not only as a place of *fairy* resort, but as being once the spot where stood the seat of a giant, whose grave (as some say) is still to be seen, and which is described as fitting any one who will lie within it, whether he be tall or short, and that the person so lying in it will have renewed strength; tradition also relates, that if arms are placed therein they will be immediately destroyed. It is said of this giant, that he invited the neighbouring giants to try their strength with him in throwing stones, and that he won the victory by throwing his quoit to Ireland! (a pretty good distance to throw a stone!)

Among other traditions related by the Welsh, of the valiant opposition of their ancestors to the Saxons and other enemies, is one respecting the brave and noble chieftain *Owen Lawgoch*, said to be one of the last who fought against the Saxons, and who with his gallant troops being compelled to retreat, retired to a cave on the northern side of *Mynnydd Mawr*, near Llandilo, Carmarthenshire, where they obtained food by foraging; every morning it is said, the chief watered his horse at a fine spring, (on the summit of the mountain;) covered with a large stone, which required gigantic strength to lift it up; after watering his horse as usual one

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morning, he forgot to replace the stone, and coming there the next day was terrified at sight of a lake of water, covering a large tract of ground where the well stood. This was occasioned by his neglecting to cover the well.—After relating the circumstance to his men, they all laid themselves down in their armour, and were so overpowered with sleep that they never awoke, and *still* lie dormant in the bowels of the mountain, where, as the legend goes, they are to remain until awaked by the sound of a trumpet and the clang of arms on Rhywgoch, when they will resume their pristine vigour, and issuing from the cave will conquer their Saxon enemies, and drive them from their land. *Llynllechwen*, or the lake of the red handed Owen, is on the top of Mynnydd Mawr, the property of E.H. Adams, Esq. of Middleton Hall.

There was formerly a hawthorn tree growing in a gentleman's garden at Aberglasney, in Carmarthenshire, which was said to be in flower every Christmas eve, but the blossoms were observed the next morning faded; owing to the numerous assemblies who came to see this phenomenon, the gentleman caused it to be cut down, since which time the grass around where it grew is green every Christmas eve, but withers before morning: it is supposed to be an emblem of the birth of Christ, and I have somewhere read of a similar tree existing in North Wales.

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About four miles from Pentre, Radnorshire, is a bridge said to have been constructed by the devil, but the people imagining that he had some mischief in his head when he built it, and thinking it unsafe to trust to his architectural remains, have thrown an arch over it. In Switzerland, the common people, says the author of "The Devil painted by himself," entertain so high a notion of his talents, that they attribute to him the construction of several masterpieces of architecture; and Milton asserts that he excels in the *building of bridges.*

For the following traditions, I am indebted to Giraldus, a monk of Pembrokeshire, living about the year 1200, and whose work in Latin gives several traditions and accounts of the Ancient Britons. —In Anglesea there was a curious stone which obtained the appellation of the thigh stone, from its being of the same form as a man's thigh; if it was removed, as it often was from motives of curiosity, it would always return through some invisible agency, immediately to its usual place, so that its fame spread far and wide, until at length Hugh, Earl of Chester, heard of it, and wishing to try the experiment, ordered it to be chained fast to a stone, many times its own magnitude and weight, and thrown into the sea, which was effected; but notwithstanding this, it was observed in its old situation next day; this circumstance coming to the knowledge of a bold and resolute fellow, he determined to ascertain the fact himself, accordingly he had the

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temerity to tie the stone as fast as could be done, to his own thigh, when he went to rest, but to his horror when he arose in the morning, he found his own thigh mortified and the stone gone! It was supposed to have been placed there by the devil, and that the spot where it was, led to his dominions, but it has now sunk into the invisible regions, thus affording no further room to ascertain its miraculous power.

In the reign of Henry I. Griffith ap Rys ap Tewdor, prince of South Wales, and two Englishmen of rank, who had defrauded him of a considerable portion of his property, were riding together near Savathan lake, when one of the Englishmen observed that there was a tradition respecting that lake, that if the rightful proprietor of South Wales should command the birds swimming on the lake to sing, they would instantly obey his mandate; "well," said the cunning Cambrian, "as you are the owners of it, desire the birds to sing, that the prophecy may be fulfilled;" as they could not consistently with propriety refuse, both issued the word of command to the feathered tribe; but they might as well have commanded "the stones to become bread," for the birds remained dumb; upon this, Griffith alighted from his horse, and prayed through faith in God, that the truth might be made manifest, and in the name of the Most High, desiring the birds to sing, every one on the lake ascended, singing as if to outvie each other: the truth of

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this, Giraldus relates, was testified by the oaths of the English nobles on their return to London.

In order to demonstrate how holy the churches of Wales formerly were, I shall relate a few instances of miraculous events which transpired, some no less absurd than those of heathen mythology. About the year 1110, Lord Radnor, it is reported, was out hunting near Fuellt, and not being very scrupulous about religion, lodged his dogs during the night in Llanafan church, but going to look for them in the morning, he was astonished at discovering them all seized with madness, and his huntsman who was with them deprived of his sight! Also, a youth, about the same year, went to Dewi church, Breconshire, with the intent of purloining, and previous to commencing operations ascended the belfry, to rob a pigeon's nest, but as soon as he had stretched out his hand for that purpose, was extremely mortified to find that he could neither touch the nest, nor withdraw his hand; he remained in this unenviable situation several days, and it was not until he had prayed and fasted during that time, that he could extricate himself.

In St. Hermone's church, near Rhiader, there was a crutch said to have belonged to St. Cyrio, which was kept in the gallery there, and on account of its various virtues, decorated with all kinds of pearls and precious stones; it was said to possess the extraordinary power of curing the king's evil, moren, warts, and all diseases incident to the neck;

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those who went with a design of putting its virtue to the test, would prostrate themselves with great humility before it, and present a considerable sum for their cleansing; but unless they remembered the latter part of the ceremony, it was useless to expect a cure.—"Si nihil attuleris ibis, Homere, foras."

When Giraldus and the Archbishop of Caerleon were once preaching near Milfordhaven, a woman of that neighbourhood who had been afflicted with a cœcity for three years, had such faith in the efficacy of holy men, that she dispatched her son to obtain if possible, even a thread of the bishop's garment; but not being able to approach the prelate on account of the concourse of people which surrounded him, he hit upon an expedient which served the purpose desired, for taking a turf from the spot where the bishop stood, after the sermon was concluded, he carried it to his anxious parent, who applied it to her eyes and instantly recovered.

There stood formerly near Brecon, a chapel called Elnyfed chapel, concerning which the legendary account states, that on one of the saint's days being kept there, after the conclusion of service, the people were seized with a sort of lunacy, making motions with their hands and feet of whatever works they had unrighteously performed on other saint's days, so that some were making signs of leaping, some of plaiting, some of spinning, others

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of combing flax or knitting stockings, &c. but after they had made offerings before the altar, and begged forgiveness of the saints, they were restored to their senses. The same writer says, that in a rock by the sea side, in Glamorganshire, there was an aperture to which if any one applied his ear, he would hear confused noises, as if many smiths and forges were at work; and his opinion is, that it is the sound of the rushing of the sea water. Many other equally marvellous tales are related by him.*

Now for the fairies, or as Cleland says,

"Faunes or brownies if ye will,
Or satyrs come from Atlas hill."

I have often regretted, that whilst the legends of England, Scotland, Ireland, and other countries, have been published, few comparatively speaking, of the Welsh traditions are known; even what are, are not of such interest as one could wish: however I have given the most interesting that I have been able to collect. We cannot avoid smiling at the ludicrous credulity of our rude forefathers, as regards elves, fairies, and miraculous events, and we have occasion to rejoice, that we live in such an age of refinement and wisdom, when tales of like inhuman beings as fays and sylphs, are regarded but as dreams of our ancestors: for we can now travel England and Wales over, in "the sable shades of

* The legends of Cantrev y Gwaelod and Arthur's quoits, are too well known to be related here.

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night," without fear of encountering fairies or ghosts; and this march of intellectual improvement has made its appearance even in our nurseries, for children now-a-days, are no longer frightened with "the ghost or naughty man will have you," "the fairies are coming," and such like improper sayings, which only contributed to sow the seeds of superstition in our infant minds, and which in most cases "grew with our growth and strengthened with our strength." The aspect of affairs is changed, and none can deny but that it has been for the better, and that we have seen "the dawning of a brighter day;" as in England, fairies had different denominations, as Pixies, Brownies, Pigmies, Faunes, Kelpies, &c.; so in Wales they were called Bendith eu mammau, Tylwyth teg, Ellyllon, &c. but although they have made their appearance among nearly every nation, and under different appellations, it would seem they pertain to the same genus, and were always denoted to be puny beings, although by the bye, it does not appear they were, by their numerous and efficient actions. But we have no account of their being so bold and familiar as some we hear of in Scotland and England, who frequented houses in "the glare of noontide," as the Brownie (supposed to be descended from the Lar Familiaris of the ancients,) who sedulously employed himself in performing drudgery for the families he

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frequented: or like Milton's lubber fiend, stretched himself by the fire, &c. It is not my purpose to detail the habits, of each class of these Lilliputians, as some we are told were meagre, shaggy and wild, and others exceedingly fair and mischievous; but merely to notice the fairies,—their principal amusement, for which too they have a strange predilection, is dancing,

"When the pale moon ascending high,
Darts through the limes her quiv'ring beams,"

and our modern fair ones seem to imitate this example of theirs, and like those sweet creatures, the fairies, when offended, are bent upon punishment, and not so easily coaxed into favour again.—It is highly probable that the Saxon fairy tales, coloured a little in an English dress, and adopted as the original composition of the English author, *had their origin from Wales.* No allusion is made to the modern tales, but to those of ancient date, which bear a similarity to those of the *Welsh.*—Howard says they are of oriental extract, and were invented by the Persians and Arabs, whose history and religion abound with stories of fairies and dragons.* The Persians style them *Peri*, the Arabs *Genii*, and the place of their abode is called *Ginnistian*, or Fairy land; their dresses it seems were not of the same colour, as some describe them dressed all in *white*, with something like feathers

* Probably the genii of the East may be considered a kind of fairies.

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waving in the wind; others as dressed in *scarlet*, and dancing without order, some in and others on the ring; whilst others particularly in North Wales, say they danced in *blue petticoats*, paying the strictest regard to order, and never deviating from a perfect circle. On an encampment called Moyddin, in Cardiganshire, where it is said they resorted, they were seen to wear *green* dresses, and never frequented the place but in the month of May.

The Welsh in several tales, represent them as appearing in the morning or evening, and Shakespeare says,

"Night's quick dragons cut the clouds full fast,
And yonder shines Aurora's harbinger,
At whose approach ghosts wand'ring here and there
Troop home to churchyards, &c.
* * * * * * *
But we are spirits of another sort;
I with the *morning light* have oft made sport,
And like the forester the groves may tread,
E'en till the eastern gale all fiery red,
Op'ning on Neptune, with far-blessing beams,
Turns into yellow gold his salt green streams."

In some places, particularly in the lower parts of Monmouthshire, there existed till lately a notion among the dairy maids, that the fairies paid occasional visits to their dairies, but were not so liberal as in former days, when they never skimmed their milkpans without remunerating them with a *silver*

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penny, which was placed in some conspicuous place for the maid. Dryden thus alludes to this:—

" I speak of ancient times, for now the swain
Returning late may pass the woods in vain,
And never hope to see the nightly train;
In vain the dairy now with mint is drest,
The dairy maid expects no fairy guest
To skim the bowls and after pay the feast.
She sighs, for ah! she shakes her stores in vain,
No silver penny to reward her pain."

The English tales of these moonlight revellers bear a similarity to those of Wales, in the allusion to the silver penny, and the exorcising of the vicious and wicked fairies by the parish priest. Dryden thus speaks on the subject:

" Now priests with prayer and other godly gear,
Have made the merry goblins disappear;
And where they play'd their merry pranks before,
Have sprinkled holy water on the floor:
And friars that through the region run,
Thick as the motes that twinkle in the sun,
Resort to farmers rich, and bless their halls,
And exorcise their beds and cross the walls,
This makes the fairy throng forsake the place
When once 'tis hallow'd with the rights of grace."

He also thus writes on their holding their sabbaths in Britain:

" In days of old when Arthur fill'd the throne,
Whose acts and fame to foreign lands were blown,

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The king of elves and little fairy queen,
Gambol'd on heaths and danc'd on every green,
And where the jolly troop had led the round,
The grass unbidden rose and mark'd the ground;
Nor darkling did they dance; the silver light
Of Phœbe serv'd to guide their steps aright.—
Above the rest our Britain held they dear,
More solemnly they kept their sabbaths here,
And made more spacious rings, and revel'd
round the year."

The following is the *Can y Tylwyth Teg*,* or the fairy's song:

" Dowch, Dowch, gyfeillion mân,
O blith marwolion byd,
Dowch, Dowch, a Dowch yn lan.
Partowch, Partowch, eich pibau can,
Gan ddawnsio Dowch i gyd,
Mae yn hyfryd heno i hwn.
Y lleuad gan dis-gleirio mae,
Gyfeilles haul yw hon,
Yr hîn y Tylwyth Teg.
Am hynny yr awn ni bob yn ddau,
Tra peri' r golau llor.
I ddawnsio ysgafn droed.

There are also many well composed Welsh songs, said to have been sung by fairies; I shall make a feeble attempt to introduce some of the ideas in an English dress.

* In the Hynafion Cymreig is a very excellent Welsh song of the fairies.

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"From flow'ry meads, and fern so green,
Companions hasten here,
The silv'ry moon in splendor's seen,
No mortals now are near;
And gently sweeps the southern breeze
The foliage among,
And sweetly heard from yonder trees,
The nightbird chants her song.

The well-swept hearth, the clean-kept floor,
And blazing fire we love,
With water near, we ask no more,
For such we far will rove.
Come tune your pipes, and close the ring,
In concert join as one,
Till twilight's seen we'll dance and sing,
Then disappear from man.

I'll go just now where Gwenwi sleeps,
Who keeps her floor so clean,
I'll tell her where her sweetheart keeps,
I'll do the same to Jane:
I'll tell them when they'll come again,
Array'd in Sunday dress,
To give the long-wish'd kiss, and then
Enjoy the fond caress.

CHORUS.

Bring, bring, the trefoil bring,
With acorns grace the feast,
Whilst in yon grove we form a ring,
Bring, bring of nuts the best;

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Their juice, more sweet than mead e'er made,
We'll suck, and keep the shell;
To drink the milk of Moll, the jade,
Whose house is not clean'd well.

They had, it is reported, their king and queen, princes and laws, wars and battles, like mortals, and were very fierce towards their opponents, fighting with unbounded fury, and giving no quarter.—The author of *Hynafion Cymreig*, (Antiquities of Wales) adds, that they had a language peculiar to themselves, which was not unlike Greek; when they asked for water they said "*Udor udorum*," and and when they asked for salt, "*Hulgein udorum*."

Some relate of a battle of theirs fought on a mountain between Merthyr Tydvil and Aberdâr, and it would be deemed an insult by many a narrator of this memorable event, were you known to doubt its occurrence. The onset cannot be described better than in the words of the poet Tickel, in his "Kensington Gardens:"

"Now the shrill corn pipes echoing loud to arms,
To rank and file reduce the straggling swarms,
Thick rows of spears at once with sudden glare,
A grove of needles glitter in the air;
Loose in the wind small ribbon streamers flow,
Dipt in all colours of the heavenly bow,
And the gay host that now its march pursues,
Gleams o'er the meadows in a thousand hues."

One party endeavoured to dispossess the other of little rising ground which they occupied, and at last

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succeeded, when the greatest confusion prevailed; black and white horses became intermixed, and their riders engaged with the greatest fury, whilst some in particular rode through their broken ranks cheering their party. Needle spears as numerous as trees in groves, were in one minute held up, in another let down. They then seemed as if engaged sword in hand, yet none could be perceived, but now and then something like penknife blades dazzled; after a sharp encounter the army headed by the leaders in white, completely drove the other, and the field being cleared, the whole disappeared in a light mist, and not a vestige remained to tell of the terrible affray! The cause of the battle is not known, but the inquisitive may learn it, with other minutiæ, by referring to the *Fairy Archives*, where doubtless it is recorded.

The following is the account related in Wales of the origin of the fairies, and was told me by an individual from Anglesea. In our Saviour's time there lived a woman whose fortune it was to be possessed of near a score of children, (what would the Malthusians now-a-days say to such a living stock?) and as she saw our blessed Lord approach her dwelling, being ashamed of being so prolific, and that he might not see them all, she concealed about half of them closely, and, after his departure, when she went in search of them, to her surprise found they were all gone. They never afterwards could be discovered, for it was supposed that

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as a punishment from heaven, for hiding what God had given her, she was deprived of them; and, it is said, these, her offspring, have generated the race of beings called fairies.

In some parts of Pembrokeshire and Carmarthenshire, we have some singular accounts of *Islands* inhabited by fairies, who attended regularly the markets at Milford Haven and Laugharne, bought in silence their meat and other necessaries, and leaving the money, (generally *silver pennies*) departed, as if knowing what they would have been charged. They sometimes were visible and at other times invisible. The islands, which appeared to be beautifully and tastefully arranged, were seen at a distance from land, and supposed to be numerously peopled by an unknown race of beings. It was also imagined that they had a subterraneous passage from these islands to the towns. It is reported, they were particularly fond of purchasing their meat from one butcher, to whom they often came invisible, and after taking the meat deposited the proper payment.

A taste for relating traditionary legends prevailed very much in the 17th and remoter centuries, and, were we ideally to feast our minds upon past days, we could scarcely refrain from dreaming ourselves in the venerable circle of our forefathers, hearing them relate, with more ingenuity than we are able to write, the stories of spirits, and the gambols of fairies, while each tries to excel the other in

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the aptness of his respective relation. Many, if not all, our Welsh fairy tales, originated from this circle. The Welsh, of olden times, made it a custom to meet at stated periods, generally on a spring or summer's evening, after they had taken their homely supper of sopas,* or in winter before or at supper, round a blazing fire of Mawn y mynnidd or turf, where whilst the long blue horn went round with the sparkling mead, they related their tales.—We will imagine ourselves in the circle, listening to yon aged sire, who, adjusting his long silvery hair, which prevents his venerable countenance from being displayed as a narrator to the best advantage, is, at the request of his younger friends, about to relate the celebrated tale of the Fairies of Frennifaur.†

"It is now about fifty years ago since a stripling, of twelve or more years of age, was tending his father's sheep on a small mountain, called Frennifaoh; it was a fine morning in June, and he had just driven the sheep to their pasture for the day, when he looked at the top of Frennifaur to observe which way the morning fog declined, that he might judge of the weather,‡ and, to his surprise, saw

* Sopas was a food in very general use among the Cymru of old, either as a dinner or supper meal: it was composed of fresh oatmeal mixed with buttermilk, and esteemed a most wholesome meal. It is still used in some parts.

† A high mountain in Pembrokeshire, called by some Brenin fawr, and by others Brynnan mawr; it is about ten miles south of Cardigan.

‡ If the fog on Frennifaur declines to the Pembrokeshire side, the peasants prognosticate fair; if on the Cardigan side, foul weather.

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what seemed a party of soldiers sedulously engaged in some urgent affair; knowing there could not possibly be soldiers there so early, he, with some alarm, looked more minutely, and perceived they were too diminutive for men; yet thinking his eye-sight had deceived him, he went to a more elevated situation, and discovered that they were the Tylwyth Teg dancing. He had often heard of them, and had seen their rings in the neighbourhood, but not till then had the pleasure of seeing them; he once thought of running home to acquaint his parents, but judging they would be gone before he returned, and he be charged with a falsehood, he resolved to go up to them, for he had been informed that the fairies were very harmless, and would only injure those who attempted to discover their habitations; so by degrees he arrived within a short distance of the ring, where he remained some time observing their motions. They were of both sexes, and he described them as being the most handsome people he had ever seen, they also appeared enchantingly cheerful, as if inviting him to enter and join the dance.—They did not all dance, but those who did, never deviated from the circle: some ran after one another with surprising swiftness, and others (females) rode on small white horses of the most beautiful form. Their dresses, although indescribably elegant, and surpassing the sun in radiance, varied in colour, some being white, others scarlet,, and the

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males wore a red tripled cap, but the females some light headdress, which waved fantastically with the slightest breeze. He had not remained long ere they made signs for him to enter, and he gradually drew nearer till at length he ventured to place one foot in the circle, which he had no sooner done than his ears were charmed with the most melodious music, which moved him, in the transport of the moment, to enter altogether: he was no sooner in, than he found himself in a most elegant palace, glittering with gold and pearls; here he enjoyed every variety of pleasure, and had the liberty to range wherever he pleased, accompanied by kind attendants beautiful as the Houries; and instead of Tatws llaeth,* buttermilk, or fresh boiled flummery,† here were the choicest viands and the purest wine in abundance, brought in golden goblets inlaid with gems, sometimes by invisible agency, and at other times by the most beautiful virgins. He had only one restriction, and that was not to drink, upon any consideration (or it was told him it would be fatal to his happiness), from a certain well in the middle of the garden, which contained golden fishes and others of various colours. New objects daily at-

* Potatoes and milk, a meal much eaten by the peasantry. The potatoes are scraped clean, and then, either roasted or boiled, are beaten to a fine stiff consistency, and taken with buttermilk.

† A healthy and pleasant food used by the lower class, and made from rough ground oatmeal soaked in water, the drain of which boiled, becomes thick, and is used with milk.

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tracted his attention, and new faces presented themselves to his view, surpassing, if possible, those he had seen before; new pastimes also were continually invented to charm him, but one day his hopes were blasted, and all his happiness fled in an instant. Possessing that innate curiosity common to most of us, he, like our first parents, transgressed, and plunged his hand into the well, when, the fishes instantly disappeared, and, putting the water in his mouth, he heard a confused shriek run through the garden: in an instant after, the palace and all vanished away, and, to his horror, he found himself in the very place where he had first entered the ring; and the scenes around, with the same sheep grazing, were just as he had left them. He could scarcely believe himself, and hoped, and hoped again, that he was in the magnificent fairy castle; he looked around, but the scene was too well known: his senses soon returned to their proper action, and his memory proved that, although he thought he had been absent so many years, he had been only so many minutes."

This as regards the time the boy was under the spell, differs much from the other Welsh fairy tales, as most of those who had the pleasure of joining the Ellyllon, (fairies) imagined they had been with them but *a few minutes* when they had been *an age*, as the following will exemplify.—A person residing near Pencader, Carmarthenshire, is reported to

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have entered the fairy circle on an adjoining mountain, and having danced as he thought for a few minutes, by some means stepped out, but was much astonished to find the scenes to which he had been accustomed, completely changed, and new houses, roads, and improvements, which he had never seen or dreamt of; the place where his father's cot stood, was occupied by a neat and handsome farm house, and where before there was a barren mountain, he saw luxuriant fields. "This surely, thought he, must be a fairy illusion; I have only been a minute or two in their ring, and lo! they have changed the aspect of nature entirely: I hope what I see is real, and that my father's cot is *really* converted into that well built farm house." Thus ruminating, and still supposing that what he saw was magic, he proceeded, but his progress was obstructed by a substantial and not an imaginary hedge, he felt, and felt it again, —rubbed his eyes, thinking he was dreaming, but a thorn running into his hand soon convinced him it was no chimerical scene; indeed the hedge seemed from the size of the thorns to be very old; so proceeding onwards he entered the farm yard, where once stood the cot wherein he first beheld the light of the world: he stared wildly around like one deranged, for a strange dog disputed the ground with him, and by his continued barking informed him he had no right there. "How can this be, said he? where am I? this is not poor *Tango?* all seem to be changed!—strange cows—strange fowls—strange

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ducks and geese! surely I have lost my road, and have travelled to an unknown neighbourhood! but no! yonder is the *Garreg hir** (the long stone) and I know too well the brow of that hill to be deceived." He was disturbed in this soliloquy by the farmer, who came to know the cause of the dog's barking, and seeing the youth (for he was still one in appearance), addressed him in the common Welsh term, "Pwy' n' ych chwi druan?" (who are you, poor man?") "I know who I *was*, I do not know who I *am now*," replied he, "I *was* the son of a man who lived in this place, this morning; for that rock though changed a little, I too well know to be deceived." "*Poor man*" said the farmer, you have lost your senses, this house was built by my great grandfather, repaired by my grandfather, and that part there which seems newly built, was done about three years ago at my expence; you must be deranged or have lost the road, but come in and refresh yourself with some victuals and rest." The poor man was half persuaded that he had overslept himself and lost his road, but looking back he saw the rock before mentioned, and exclaimed, "It is but three hours since I was on yonder rock robbing a hawk's nest;" "Where have you been since?" enquired the man; he then related his adventure,

* The Garreg-hir is a well known erect stone on a mountain south of Pencader, and was placed there in ancient times, probably to commemorate a victory.

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when the farmer said, "You have been I see with the fairies, how long, no one knows; pray who was your father?" "Sion Evan y crydd o Glanrhyd," replied he. "I never heard of such a man or such a place, but after you have taken a little food we will step down to Catti shon, Pencader, who probably may afford us some information," said the farmer. After a short time he arose, and desired the man to follow, but hearing the sound of his footsteps grow weaker and weaker, he turned round and to his horror saw the poor man crumble in an instant to about a thimblefull of black ashes.—Although much terrified at the sight, he did not then mention the circumstance to any one, but went to old Catti, whom he found in a chair seated by her fire of faggots, and after enquiring of her health, which she said was very good considering her old age, he introduced his subject by saying, "As you are so old, if your memory has not failed you, do you recollect anything of Sion y crydd Glanrhydd?" "Sion Glanrhydd! Sion Glanrhydd! O! I have some faint recollection of hearing my grandfather old Evan Shenkin Penferdir relate that Sion's son was lost one morning, and they never heard of him afterwards, so that it was said he had been taken by the fairies; his father's cot stood somewhere near your house." "The fairies! were they numerous at that time?" enquired the farmer. "O yes," replied she, "They were often seen formerly on yonder hill, and I was told they were lately in Pant

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shon Shenkin, in Carmarthenshire, eating ewd u llaeth (flummery) out of egg shells, which they had stolen from an adjoining farm. "*Dir anwyl fi!*" (dear me! a common expression), I recollect now to have seen them about ten years ago myself, how they danced and danced away, it made me long to join them, but I was afraid." Thus ended the interview.

Old Catti's reference to Pant shon Shenkin, brings to mind the many unconnected traditions respecting the place being a rendezvous for fairies. It is believed by some of the lovers of the marvellous, that a fairy was caught by a woman on the mountain near Pant shon shenkin, and that it remained a long time in her custody, retaining still the same height and size, but at last made its escape. Many other equally improbable stories are narrated by those residing near the above place, who quote the testimony of their grandfathers, fathers, shepherd boys, &c. Amongst other tales connected with Pantshonshenkin, is the following, —a young man had just quitted an adjacent farm house, early one fine summer's morning, when he heard a little bird* singing in the most enchanting strain, on a tree close by: allured by the melody, he sat down under it until the music ceased, when he arose, supposing a few minutes only had elapsed,

* This bears, as respects the bird, a strong resemblance to the tale of The Friar, in one of the Annuals.

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but his surprise may well be imagined, when he saw the tree withered and barkless; returning full of astonishment to the house, he found *that* changed too, and no one within but an old man whom he had never seen before. He asked him what he wanted there? upon which the old man abruptly enquired who was he that dared insult him in his own house? "In your own house! where's my father and mother?" said he, "whom I left here a *few minutes since*, while I have been listening to the most charming music under yon tree, which, when I arose was withered and leafless, and all things too seem changed." "Under the tree!—music!—what is your name? "John," said he, "Poor John," cried out the old man, "I heard my grandfather, who was your father, often speak of you, and long did he bewail your absence: fruitless enquiries were made of you, but old Catti Madlen, of Brechfa, said that you were under the power of fairies, and would not be released until the last sap of that sycamore tree would be dried up. "Embrace, embrace, my dear uncle, your nephew!" The old man was about to embrace him, but he suddenly *crumbled into dust!*

The following legend is, by permission of the worthy editor, extracted from the Cambrian Quarterly Magazine, which is replete with interesting and amusing information.—"In the parish of Llan—on the northern border of Cambria, there runs a long bare precipitous rugged hill, in the shadow of which

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the little village of Llan — stands. In the middle of this rock there is a cave, with jaws as ragged and uneven as the hill into which it opens. The story went that it reached from Llan— under the Morda, the Ceiriog, and a thousand other streams, under many a league of mountain, marsh, and moor, under the almost unfathomable wells, that, though now choked up, once supplied Sycharth, the fortress of Glyndwrdwy, all the way to Chirk Castle — There was a wild tradition connected with it, that awed the most fearless from a nearer approach to its brink than to the crater of a volcano: that, whoever approached within five paces of it, would inevitably be lost. The origin of this belief it is impossible to state, but it was plain it had prevailed for centuries, for far round the cave the grass grew as thick and as rank as in the wilds of America, or some unapproached ledge of the Alps, and the briars grew around it undisturbed, tangling and strangling each other. The origin of the cave itself, and who were the beings who formed it, were also, in the oldest times, matters of mysterious speculation; whether a place of retreat for the Pagans of old, when their rites were banished from "llygad y dydd," (the day's eye,) or a spying glass for the astrologer Idris, or the mouth of a hearing-trumpet for the foul fiend himself to make out what was going on in this upper world, without the trouble of an excursion, is quite unknown. Certain it is, that, such were the fears entertained of this spot not only

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by men, but by animals, that a fox, with a pack of hounds in full cry at his tail, has been known to turn short round, in approaching it, with his hair all bristled and fretted like frostwork, with terror, and to have run into the middle of the pack, as if any thing earthly, even an earthly death, was a relief to his supernatural perturbations. But I have been informed that, as a steel rubbed with a magnet exercises at last the powers of attraction for itself, so the fox escaped by the powers of repulsion he had acquired at the cavern's mouth, for not a dog would approach him, such was the smell of assafœtida about him, and his hide was all burnished with green, yellow, and blue lights, as it were with a profusion of will o' the wisps. But the marvel of marvels was that Elias ap Evan, who happened one Fair night to stagger just upon the rim of the forbidden space, is said to have arrived at home perfectly sober, the only interval of sobriety, morning, noon, or night, Elias had been afflicted with for upwards of twenty years. It was remarked that, although Elias drank as fervently and as deeply after the event as before, Elias had become "an altered man:" although he drank as much as ever, he never could get so drunk as formerly, as he himself fantastically expresses it: "his shadow walked steadily before him, that at one time wheeled around him, like a pointer over bog and stone."

It was the twilight of a misty Hallow-eve when an old shepherd was returning home, now straight

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forward, now in a wide circle, according as the love of his chimney corner, or the fear of the cave and its five paces, was uppermost. He had just arrived full opposite that land, Maelstrom of Diaboly, when suddenly a faint burst of melody seemed to be dancing up and down the rocks above the cave: now it seemed to proceed from one stone, then from another, like my grandmother's tooth-ache, which, as fast as one of her dentals was expelled, enthroned itself in one of the survivors; and now every pebble on the summit seemed to have a voice in one fantastic and eddying chorus.

The shepherd, motionless with terror, with that painful intensity of perception that terror bestows, fancied he could count every hair on the back of his dog, that crouched and quivered between his legs, as the cold wind squealed and ploughed up first one hair and then another. The music suddenly assumed something like a locality, and moulded itself into something like a tune, though, by the bye, it was a tune that the shepherd had never heard before. But it seemed as if the tune, like mortal wights, was jolted into a fit of indigestion, by attempting to run down that shingly descent.—Whenever it began a fine dignified martial flourish, every long note of which it was composed, was immediately carved and frittered into a thousand clamorous unmeaning demisemiquavers, and its sweet pathetic inuendos often jumped into a fierce climax of groans and discordancy. At this very moment

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a figure well known to him became visible. He had a lantern strung before him, and a fiddle at his chest, and his legs were on the caper incessantly. "'Tis Iolo ap Hugh! I remember his wager that he would dance all the way down the hill, and keep up a tune with his fiddle." Scarcely had the shepherd said this, when his fears revived afresh, on seeing that Iolo had fiddled and capered himself within the fatal circle. He shouted and shouted till the very farthest mountains echoed, but Iolo seemed perfectly deaf, still tossing his head and his lantern up and down, and poussetting with all apparent complacency, when suddenly the moon shone full on the cave's yellow mouth, and he saw poor Iolo for a single moment, but it was distinctly and horribly. His face was pale as marble, and his eyes stared fixedly and deathfully, whilst his head dangled loose and unjointed on his shoulders. His arms seemed to keep his fiddlestick in motion without the least sympathy from their master. The shepherd saw him a moment on the verge of the cave, and then, still capering and fiddling, vanish like a shadow from his sight; but the old man has often been heard to say, "he seemed as it were to skate into the cave, quite different from the step of a living and a willing man, but he was dragged inwards, like the smoke up the chimney, or the mist at sunrise."

Days, years, and months, had elapsed, and all hopes and sorrows connected with poor Iolo had not only passed away, but were nearly forgotten;

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the old shepherd had long lived in a parish at a considerable distance amongst the hills from Llan—. One cold December Sunday evening, he and his fellow parishioners were shivering in their seats as the clerk was beginning to light the church, when a strange burst of music starting suddenly from beneath the aisle, threw the whole congregation into confusion, and then it passed featly along to the farther end of the church, and died gradually away, till at last it was impossible to distinguish it from the wind that was careering and wailing through almost every pillar of the old church of Llan—. The shepherd immediately recognised this to be the tune Iolo had played at the mouth of the cave, though, whatever was the cause, whether that Iolo was traversing a smoother surface, or that he now, like other spirits, wandered o'er nothing but unresisting air, certain it is that the tune, as the shepherd heard it the second time, and as the parson of the parish, a connoisseur in music, took it down from his whistling, was much less abrupt and mountainous than on the former occasion. The Rev. Mr, Ap —— presented my grandmother, of whom he was an admirer, with a copy of it, and I hope Mrs. Hemans will sometime favor us with a vocal strain worthy of this keepsake of a sonata dug from amongst the subterraneans.*

* The music will be found in the Camb. Quart. Mag. Vol. 1. P. 43.

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Now what became of Iolo ap Hugh, after the infernal Orphean finale, no one knows; though many and positive have been the decisions on the subject. Some maintain that he was chosen huntsman by Gwynn ap Nudd (the Fairy King), and that every Hallow-evenight he is to be seen cheering the hounds of Annwn (the world unknown, or the world of darkness,) over the peaks of Cadair Idris, and that his fiddle was changed into a bugle horn. Some again maintain, that Iolo stumbled into a fairy ring in the middle of the cave, and that he will be kept there, curvetting and scraping, till the day of doom; and it is said that, in certain nights in leap-year, a star stands opposite the farther end of the cave, and enables you to view all through it; and to see Iolo and its other inmates. In support of this hypothesis, it is also urged, that if on Hallow-eve you will put your ear to the aperture, you may hear the tune, "Farewell! Ned Pugh," as distinctly as you may hear the waves roar in a sea-shell. But I lean most to the opinion of Æneas Mac Doyle, an Irish serjeant, who was recruiting in the village: he thought that "Ned was only gone to spend a few thousand years in *larning* the music of the *sphares*."

Many a time have I listened, with all the wistfulness of boyhood, but never could I hear any thing but the moaning of the imprisoned gusts of wind; and I have shouted into the cave a shout that would have reached a mile on level ground, but never did I receive any other reply than the reverberation of

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its organ-toned echoes, like a clamorous laugh of fiendish and tumultuous scorn, at the mortal step or mortal voice that should hope to penetrate their dark and unfathomable abysses."

BEUNO.

There is a curious story related of two young men of Llanarmon, who went to Ruthin fair for the purpose of meeting their sweethearts: after presenting the fairing, enjoying the dance, and parting kiss, they set out homewards. It was near midnight when they entered a wood through which they had to pass, and the awful blackness of the sky, with no moon or star to afford them light, conspiring against them, by some mischance they lost each other; the foremost, who had suffered many entanglements in the thorny thickets, after repeated hallooings without any return from his companion, was deluded into a belief that he had reached the mountain and was out of hearing. That knavish spright "Robin Goodfellow," "who misleads night's wanderers laughing at their harm," had separated the two friends, one of whom reached home that night, but the other not till morning, and in such a plight that he was not recognized by his relations; his face was covered with wounds, and his clothes were in tatters: after having recovered a little from his fright, he related that soon after losing his companion, he was surrounded by a bright illumination, and numerous fairies appeared dancing about to the sweetest music, seeming in the zenith of merriment.

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Whenever he attempted to escape, he was left in total darkness, and filled with such fear, that he preferred following them wherever they went, to being left behind. They seemed to glide along beautiful undulating walks, without the least molestation from the prickly and thorny bushes, which annoyed *him* at every step. Thus was he enticed to follow "through bog and bush, through brake and briar," until the humorous beings hearing the harbinger of day, left the poor wretch in such a state that he had scarcely strength to move.

The following is the copy of a letter from a friend of his, to the Rev. J. Griffiths, of Cilia:—

Dear Sir,

In compliance with your request, I have the pleasure to communicate to you the result of my enquiries respecting the tradition of Iago ap Dewi,* being carried away by fairies, and living with them seven years. I conversed with several elderly persons residing in the neighbourhood where he dwelt, and was informed by one that her father knew him well; that he lived in the parish of Llanllawddog, Carmarthenshire, in a cottage situated in the woods of Langwyly; was considered a wonderful man and of great learning, as he spent the whole of his time in study and meditation; that he was absent from the neighbourhood for a long period, and the universal belief among the peasantry was, that Iago got

* He was an analph, a bard of considerable talent, and translated Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress into Welsh.

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out of bed one night to gaze on the starry sky, as he was accustomed, (astrology being one of his favourite studies) and whilst thus occupied, the fairies who were accustomed to resort in a neighbouring wood, passing by, carried him away, and he dwelt with them seven years. Upon his return he was questioned by many as to where he had been, but always avoided giving them a reply.

The same individual informed me, that fairies were frequently seen in numbers on Cefngwyddil, the adjoining hills, and on the banks of the Gwyly-fach, where they made excursions to the neighbouring farms to inspect the dairies, hearths, barn floors, and the *ystafell*, to reward the meritorious housemaid, and to punish the slut and sluggard. It is said they were not partial at all to the Gospel, and that they left Monmouthshire on account of there being so much preaching, praying to, and praising God, which were averse to their dispositions.

Others with whom I conversed, confirmed the testimony of the old man relating that their parents credited the above story, and that they had no question of the existence of fairies, and their wonderful exploits; but one Mary Shon Crydd said, that when a child she knew the daughter of Iago ap Dewi, and that she thought it very probable that he had been from home with some learned characters, but the superstition of the people led them to attribute his learning, &c. to the interference of the fairies. * * * * * * * *

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An aged individual from Anglesea, solemnly affirmed to me, that when a youth he frequently saw the Tylwyth Teg, and that going out early one morning to fetch his father's cows from the field, he observed a *posse* of the little folks dancing: he says that when beholding them, his eyes became dazzled as if he was looking upon the sun, and on his return from the meadow he discovered a groat placed on a stone of Cymmunod bridge, and always after he had seen them found the same sum placed there. His having money so often about him, excited his father's suspicion, and one Sabbath day he enquired the manner in which it was obtained, when he confessed that it was through the medium of the fairies. He often went after this to the field, but never found any money on the bridge, or saw the offended Tylwyth Teg again; for through his divulging the secret, their favour and kindness was lost. The same person also informed me, that in the neighbourhood where he lived, a person one day arising to labour, was much surprised at not being able to find his shirt, and next morning much more so at beholding a fairy bounce in the room and disappear instantly; getting up soon after this, he was agreeably astonished at discovering his shirt washed clean, with half a crown enclosed in it, for which he was indebted to the little beings. At Llandrwgan, in the same county, a woman had twins, to which the fairies took a fancy and bore away, sub-

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stituting two of their own children in the cradle in lieu of them; but the resemblance between them being so great, the woman never discovered the trick until several months had elapsed, when not perceiving the children grow, she imagined that something was wrong, and accordingly took them to Gwr Cyvarwydd, or village oracle, who told her to procure an egg shell, and having filled it with wort and hops, to lay it in the way of the little folks, and particularly to observe what they said respecting it. She acted conformably to his advice, and when the fairies beheld the egg shells, seeming much astonished, one of them exclaimed, "I can remember yon oak an acorn, but I never saw in my life, people brewing in an egg shell before;" upon hearing this, the woman became infuriated,—her Cambrian blood was roused, and seizing a whip that was near, she began to let the surprised fairies taste it; but the old ones hearing the cries of their offspring interfered, and the next day the woman was much gratified and pleased at seeing her real babes again.

In the youthful days of an aged friend of mine, the belief in fairies existed in many parts of Wales; and, when a "schoolboy, with his satchel," unwillingly trudging to school, he has often observed in a meadow near Conwil, Carmarthenshire, three small circles of grass which appeared to have been weaved round the edges; wondering much for what purpose they were ordained, he once asked his mother the use of them, when she gave him a severe

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injunction not to *approach* on any account, much less *enter* the rings, for, said she, they belong to the Bendith eu mammau, (a species of fairies), and whoever enters them can never get out, it being enchanted ground.

These rings have not only been noticed by the illiterate, but by philosophers and learned characters who have advanced two opinions respecting them. Some, among whom are Dr. Priestly and Mr. Jessop, upon practical and scientific observations, attributed them to lightning, but their experiments did not prove altogether satisfactory; Drs. Wollaston, Withering, and others, who had *duly* examined these spots, ascribed them to the growth of fungi, which opinion seems undoubtedly the best.--The rings vary in size and shape, some having seven yards of *bare*, with a patch of *green* grass a foot broad in the middle; others, of various sizes, are encompassed with grass much greener than that in the interior. It is rather remarkable that no beasts will eat of them, although some persons suppose that *sheep* will greedily devour *the grass*.* Shakespeare thus speaks in his Tempest:

"Ye elves of hills, brooks, stagnant lakes and groves,
And ye that on the sands with printless foot,
Do chase the ebbing Neptune and do fly him
When he comes back; you demi puppets that

* For further particulars respecting this subject, see Dr. Rees on Fairy Rings.

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By moonshine, do the *green sour* ringlets make,
Whereof the *ewe not bites*, and you whose pastime
Is to make midnight mushrooms ———."

The following story is well known in Carmarthenshire:—a farmer going out one morning very early to fetch his horses from pasture, heard some delicious music, far sweeter he thought (no doubt) than ever bard produced from his *telyn*, (harp) and being allured by it, as we read of men being allured of old by the enchanting voices of Syrens, he proceeded to the place whence the strains seemed to issue, and in a sequestered retreat beheld the elves footing it merrily; wishing perhaps to obtain more extensive knowledge of these "dear little creatures," he had the magnanimity to enter the ring, with the intention of joining their matachin, and soon had his desire gratified, for there they kept him dancing away, night and day, without intermission; his relatives at home were at a loss to know what had become of him, and immediately concluded that he had terminated his existence, or had gone on a journey; but days, weeks, and months rolled on, and no farmer appeared, or were any tidings heard respecting him, until it chanced one day that a man passing by the lonely spot, saw him knocking his legs about as if he was bereft of his reason; and going up to him enquired

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what caused him to be so merry, which broke the spell, and the farmer as if waking out of a dream exclaimed, " O dear ! where are my horses ?" and stepping out of the magical circle fell down, and mingled his dust with the earth; no wonder, for he had been dancing without nourishment or food for more than a twelvemonth. If every fair dancer joined the Tylwyth teg's dance, how many beings would be danced out of the world ?—In Breconshire there is a legend very generally known, respecting a lake in one of the mountains, but as I cannot describe it better, I shall present it as it appears in a work entitled " Fairy Mythology."—" In ancient days, a door in a rock near the lake, was found open upon a certain day every year,—I think it was May day; those who had the curiosity and resolution to enter, were conducted by a secret passage which terminated in a small island in the centre of the lake; here the visitors were surprised with the prospect of a most enchanting garden, stored with choicest fruits and flowers, and inhabited by the Tylwyth teg, or Fair Family, a kind of fairies, whose beauty could be equalled only by the courtesy and affability which they exhibited to those who pleased them; they gathered fruits and flowers for each of their guests, entertained them with the most exquisite music, disclosed to them many secrets of futurity, and invited them to stay as long as they should find their attention agreeable; but the island was secret, and nothing of the produce must be car-

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ried away. The whole of this scene was invisible to those who stood without the margin of the lake; only an indistinct mass was seen in the middle, and it was observed that no bird would fly over the water, and that a soft strain of music at times breathed with rapturous sweetness in the breeze of the morning. It happened upon one of these annual visits that a sacrilegious wretch, when he was about to leave the garden, put a flower, with which he had been presented, in his pocket; but the theft boded him no good: as soon as he had touched unhallowed ground, the flowers vanished and he lost his senses. Of this injury the Fair Family took no notice at the time; they dismissed their guests with their accustomed courtesy, and the door was closed as usual, but their resentment ran high, for though, as the tale goes, the Tylwyth teg and their garden undoubtedly occupy the spot to this day, though the birds still keep at a respectful distance from the lake, and some broken strains of music are still heard at times, yet the door which led to the island was never reopened, and from the date of this sacrilegious act, the Cymry have been unfortunate.—Some time after this, an adventurous person attempted to draw off the water, in order to discover its contents, when a terrific form arose from the midst of the lake, commanding him to desist, or otherwise he would drown the country."

The following story, I heard from an inhabitant of Carmarthen:—

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" I cannot tell how the truth may be,
I say the tale as 'twas said to me."

It was late one evening, in the times of fairies and ghosts, before you, gentle reader, or I had seen " the light of the world," the sun had gone down,

" Amid a thousand glorious hues that liv'd
But in his presence."

Pale Cynthia shed her silvery beams upon the slumbering world, so that it was as light as day, save now and then when she hid herself beneath her dark curtain; all was still, there was not even a zephyr afloat to disturb the silence which prevailed over inanimated nature, when a young man returning from seeing " the idol of his soul," was suddenly startled by the most exquisite singing,—so sweet, that he could not describe the melody; but we will say with the inimitable bard of Avon, that it came o'er his ear

" ——— Like the sweet south,
That breathes upon a bank of violets,
Stealing and giving odour."

His curiosity being naturally excited by the strains, (which proceeded from a meadow near at hand) he determined to discover who it was that sang so delightfully, and to his infinite astonishment beheld a concourse of the Bendith eu mammau sedulously engaged in dancing around a circle; not being much acquainted with their nature and power, he marched up to them, with the intention of driving them away, but his design was soon frustrated, for they quickly

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surrounded him, and dragged him along, to his *great consternation*, as he little imagined the puny beings had such "marvellouse powere and strengthe;" the fairies, luckily for him, being in a frolicsome mood, did not punish him for his intrusion, in such a manner as they would had they been in an ill humour, but asked him what sort of a wind he would choose to be blown with, as they would give him his choice of a high, a moderate, or a low wind. The confounded countryman not considering perhaps philosophically upon the subject, fixed on a low wind, esteeming it as the least efficacious; but it did not prove so to him, for the little folks seizing his arms carried him, notwithstanding his loud and reiterated cries of "Na'm o' Got what are you apout,"

"Through miry bog,
And swampy lea,"

through brambles and briars, until his face presented a most doleful and ludicrous appearance, and his extremities were dripping wet, through the frequent passages into bogs and ditches.—After they had amused themselves in this manner so long as their inclination pleased them, they permitted him to go about his business, and doubtless when again returning home in the dark, he would never act Paul Pry again, if he heard the most bewitching strains.

From the same individual I obtained the following, which is credited, he informs me, in some

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parts of North Wales, at the present day. Two men travelling together, happened to be benighted soon after entering a wood, and one of them being fatigued sat down and slept, but when he awoke, could no where discover his companion; thinking he had travelled on, he proceeded, but when he arrived at home was astonished at the enquiries respecting his fellow, and related that he had lost him while he slept. As there seemed to be a mystery in the case, the relatives of the absent individual went to the village wizard, who informed them that he was in the power and hands of the fairies, but if they would go to the place where he was missed by his companion, just a year after that time, they would see him dancing with them, when they were to rescue him. After the year had elapsed, they went and found it as the conjuror had said, whereupon one of them dragged the man out of the ring, who immediately asked if it was not better to proceed home, imagining it was the same night, and that he was with his companion; one of the people presented him with some victuals, which he began to eat, but had no sooner done so, than he mouldered away.

It is related in Breconshire, that fairies were accustomed to be seen by those who had the courage to look in the meadows, and often "when in sportive mood," would present to the peasantry what appeared loaves of bread, but when examined in the morning, were found to be toad stools; they

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were said to be particularly favourable to clean persons; and according to report, a very clean person residing near the place of their resort, was invariably accustomed to find six-pence in her shoe, when she arose in the morning; on the contrary, a dirty and slovenly woman was pinched by them, every night, until she reformed. Some will say they sang the following words whilst so laudably engaged, but I can not vouch for the truth.

We're fond of truth and cleanliness,
And all clean folks we'll always bless;
But O! the nasty dirty jade,
Shall for her filthiness be paid.

CHORUS.

Come pinch her, pinch her, pinch away,
Black, purple, yellow, pinch away.

They are said to have frequented Pencarreg mountain, on the Llandovery road, and to have kept their holidays there. The following tale respecting them is in circulation among the neighbouring peasantry: early one Easter Monday, when the parishioners of Pencarreg and Cayo were met to play at football, they saw a numerous company of fairies dancing; being so many in number, they (the young men) were not intimidated at all, but proceeded in a body towards the puny tribe, who perceiving them, removed to another place; the men being resolute, followed, whereupon the little folks quickly commenced dancing at the first place; seeing this the

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former divided and surrounded them, when they immediately became invisible and were never more seen there.

The superstitious Giraldus relates that a priest named Elidar, living about the year 1200, testified several times to the then Bishop of St. David's, that when he was ten years of age, and accustomed to go to school, growing, like most boys of his age, fonder of diversion than hic, hæc, hoc, he one day absconded; and to screen himself from the power of his preceptor, took shelter in a cave near the sea shore, where he had not long remained, before two little beings about a foot high, made their appearance, and informed him, that if he would follow them, he should enjoy as much felicity as his heart could desire. Upon repeated solicitations, he accepted their kind invitation, and followed them. After proceeding a short distance, they arrived at a small aperture in a meadow, through which they descended into the bowels of the earth, and after travelling a little way through a region, "dark as the raven's dark wing," a beautiful and pleasant country burst open to their view, replenished with delightful fields, trees, and rivers; in fact, it was a perfect Elysium, but was not furnished with so much light as the great world they had just quitted: The pigmies who inhabited this nether world, he related, were very numerous, yellow haired, and of the size of his conductors; their chief diversion was riding on their Rosinantes, which to him appeared like hares, com-

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pared to our steeds. Their aliment was milk and roots, they neither cursed nor swore, paid the strictest adherence to truth, and hated nothing worse than a falsehood; after paying visits to the earth, which they frequently did *ad libitum*, they always expressed their abhorrence and disgust at our mode of living. Elidar dwelt with them a considerable time, and became so much in favour, that they appointed him playfellow and companion to the son of their monarch, whose most frequent amusement was bowling on a green with golden bowls; he was at length permitted by them to visit his mother, to whom he related all the particulars respecting this enchanting country, and of the enormous quantum of gold and treasures which the puny folks possessed; at this the old lady "pricked up her ears" and desired him to endeavour to purloin some of the bowls, and bring with him on his next visit; in obedience to the maternal injunction, he seized the first opportunity, and was just approaching his mother's door with his unlawful treasure, when two of the Lilliputians overtook him, and deprived him of it.—This caused him considerable uneasiness, and made him melancholy for some time, but thinking to crave their pardon, he proceeded to the opening which led to this "delightful land of fairy;" alas! he could not discover it, for it was closed upon him for ever!*

* Gwilym relates, that in the reign of King Stephen, there was a boy and girl discovered in a cave in some part of England, their bodies

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I was informed of the following fairy tale by a person from North Wales, long before my intention of publishing this work, so that my memory being rather treacherous, I have almost forgotten it, but as near as I can relate, it is as follows:—a freakish company of Fays frequented, according to rumour, a mountain in North Wales, if I mistake not Cader Idris, and oft at eve appeared in different disguises according to their caprice, at the cottages, in order to ascertain the extent of people's kindness, and if they met with an ill reception, it was said that bad luck would ever attend the offenders. It happened that one evening, as Morgan ap Rys was seated by his "ane fireside," enjoying "his pipe and his pot," and had become through his frequent libations to the jolly god, rather extra good humoured and merry, a gentle rap at the door for a moment interrupted him in his hilarity; as he was not a great proficient in manners, never stirring from his old seat, which he was always loth to leave when he was paying his addresses to Sir John, he exclaimed "Dere mewn nadpwyyd eich chwi," (come in whoever you are,) at which blunt invitation, in came three fairies as travellers, but Morgan little suspected who they were; "Can we beg a little food, good man, to put in this wallet, as we are poor and in want?" said one of them; "O is my lats, if preat and cheese will satisfy

were of a greenish hue, their hair yellow, and they were supposed to have come through a subterranean passage from an antipodal world.

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you, you are welcome, for as long as my name is Morgan, I will never refuse to those in want, no no, Morgan is not so bat as that yet;" the guests putting a little in a wallet, informed him, that as they had it in their power, they would grant him any wish he liked; now as he was very fond of music, inclining with Shakespeare, who says

"The man that hath not music in his soul,
Is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils,"

he said in his *deet*, he would like a harp to play a lively tune; "no sooner said than done," the harp was in an instant before him, and the fairies in that space gone, leaving him, to his surprise, their bag and its contents; but he immediately began to suspect who they were. Being in no mood for reflection, he still quaffed his nectar, and his better part coming in with some neighbours, soon after this occurrence, and he being through the ascendant powers of the fumes in a merry mood, recollecting the harp, thought to excite a little merriment, by showing his skill upon the instrument, and alas! for his friends, it proved as wonderful a one as Maurice O'Connor's, for the instant he commenced playing, up started the whole company on their feet, and began dancing as if they had lost their intellects, some so high, that had there been no roof to the house, God knows where they would have gone; at least one would suppose they wanted to visit the

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man in the moon; others kept jolting one another about, overturning the tables and chairs; but this game had not been continued long, before they all began to beg of Morgan to cease playing, crying out "Y mae yr diawl yndo chwi vachgen, dybenwch chware," (the d—l is in you man, leave off playing,) the jolly old toper heeded not their cries and imprecations, but continued his tune, till at length his fingers getting tired, and his risible faculties exhausted through witnessing the laughable scene before him, he concluded, to the no small joy of the dancers. After this became known, none would enter Morgan's house, for they knew that as soon as his head became fuddled, he would not scruple to play; which was very true, for whenever he had drank too deeply, he would commence operations upon his *telyn*, which did considerable damage to the good folks of the neighbourhood, many of whom had their limbs dislocated; for whoever heard the sounds of it, could not refrain from dancing. After he had one night, as usual, been performing on his harp, to the great mischief of his neighbours, he was surprised in the morning at not being able to discover it any where. It was supposed that the fairies, apprehending the mischief which would arise from it, and feeling compassion for the poor sufferers, deprived Morgan from ever displaying his powers of harmony again.

An intelligent writer in an article entitled "A Tour through Brittany," in the Cambrian Quar-

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terly Magazine, Vol. 3, P. 13, noticing the origin of Chivalry and Romance, thus continues:—" But in proportion as this subject became more investigated, and the various facts connected with it brought into notice, it became more and more evident that the primary elements of the whole system, were to be referred for their origin to the nation of the Welsh. Arthur the founder of the Round Table, was a Silurian chieftain, and all his knights, together with Merlin, the enchanter, were, without exception, of the same ancient British race. In short, the whole machinery of romance is of that identical fabrication: the mythology, traditions, and tone of sentiment, are altogether of Cymraeg origin: even those interesting personages the *fairies* themselves, are of the same Celtic stock; and however the advocates of their Oriental extraction may endeavour to derive them from the Peries of Persia, it is evident that the earliest notices of these unearthly beings are to be found in the romances of Arthur and his knights. The celebrated *Morgan la Fai*,* whose very name implies her Cambrian origin, exercised her dominion not only in Britain, but also over the whole of the continent, long before any idea of eastern mythology had found its way there; and so far had this powerful princess extended her authority, that her reign was acknowledged,

* Sometimes written Morgain and Morguein.

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not merely throughout the whole of the western world, but even in those countries whose geographical situation would naturally have rendered them subject to the influence of oriental fiction, did such influence exist, rather than to that of the remote Celtic tribes of Britain. For we find that in Italy and Greece, and in many parts of Asia itself, the spirit of the Welsh romances had extended itself, and prevailed to such a degree, as to supersede that of the native traditions. And to this day, we are informed that when that beautiful and well-known optical illusion appears on the coast of Calabria, in which the forms of the buildings, on the shore, are seen as a series of castles and palaces over the straits of Messina, the inhabitants run out of their houses to view the extraordinary phenomenon, with every demonstration of delight, exclaiming that the *Fata Morgana* has honoured them with a visit, and deigned to reveal to them some of the magnificence of her fairy abode"

"Always taking out of the meal tub and never putting in, soon comes to the bottom," as poor Richard says, and it is a saying no more trite than true; for I have drawn all the stories and tales* I was possessed of, from my folio, so that I am under the necessity of coming to a conclusion; and now,

* The Traditions of Beth Celert, Arthur's Chair, and a few others, as they are generally known, I have thought proper to withhold.

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dear reader, hoping my endeavours to amuse and please you have not been in vain, I move on to another chapter;--but cannot avoid exclaiming with Shakespeare—

"Heaven defend you from a Welsh fairy!"

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CHAPTER V.

MANNERS, CUSTOMS, &c.

"It is amusing and instructive to observe the usages and habits of any race of people."

MIRROR FOR MAGISTRATES.

Manners, &c. of the Ancient Britons.

BISHOP HALL remarks, "that any thing that was our ancestors pleases us," surely then, any thing *related of them* must afford us gratification;—if we take the trouble to look back and observe their customs and manners, we shall discover many circumstances in them that will entertain us, many traits that we cannot fail to admire, and many that we cannot avoid smiling at, seeming to us in our learned era rather ludicrous. Most of their amusements we shall perceive were calculated to promote health and strength, or tended in some degree to usefulness; and we certainly may blush that professing to be so much more enlightened than they,

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(I speak to English as well as Welsh,) we have so many effeminate and useless ones. We now no longer see the buxom fair one skimming along the plain on her palfrey, attended by her hawk or dogs,—we no longer see the skilful archers bending their supple bows at the deer or target,—our British youth engaged with the quintain, in throwing quoits or in such like healthy amusements,—no, those who delighted in them are shrouded by the sable pall of oblivion, and have mingled their dust with that of their forefathers, and these amusements are on the eve of being forgotten. But it must appear obvious to all parents, that although not dwelling in feudal times, or intending their sons to be brought up to hardiness and toil, such exercises as those mentioned, would be calculated to promote health, and much better than many of those now in vogue, which

"Though they be ne'er so ridiculous,
Nay, let 'em be unmanly, yet are follow'd."

We learn from Giraldus and others, that the ancient Welsh were a brave and hospitable people, esteeming hospitality above all other virtues, so that a beggar was to them as uncommon as a ghost now-a-days is to us. Their valour was such, that naked they encountered men entirely covered with armour, and generally proved victors. They were excellent archers and spearmen, and had bows made of osier twigs, which discharged an arrow with great force; even the meanest peasant and noblest prince deemed

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it the greatest honour to sacrifice their lives for their country, and were prepared to shed the last drop of their blood at first sight of the blazing beacon. Subsisting upon cattle and sheep, with oaten or barley bread, their beverage milk or medd, and accustomed in their youth to climb almost inaccessible mountains, penetrate woods and thickets, they were a hardy race, and enabled to endure the fatigues of war. Revenge seems prominent in their character, and although the offence might have been given in their youth, their hatred and desire for vengeance was treasured in their bosom, and did not expire but with themselves; what contributed to spread this spirit, was the custom of sending their offspring to be nursed in other families, who in consequence took under their protection the fostered children, and deemed it a great obligation to promote their interests and vindicate their injuries. It used to be the custom of the prince, when he had gained a battle, to call for the Hirlas horn, filled with metheglin, and drink the contents at one draught, then sound it to show there was no deception; each of his officers followed his example.—Mrs. Hemans has given a beautiful song in Parry's second volume of Welsh Melodies, on the subject, concluding thus—

"Fill higher the Hirlas! forgetting not those
Who shar'd its bright draught in the days that are fled!
Tho' cold on their mountains the valiant repose,

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Their lot shall be lovely, renown to the dead!
While harps in the hall of the feast shall be strung,
While regal Eryri* with snow shall be crown'd,
So long by the bard shall their battles be sung,
And the heart of the hero shall burn at the sound;
The free winds of Cambria shall swell with their name,
And Owain's rich Hirlas be fill'd to their fame!"†

They were, as I have previously remarked, very superstitious, and sat down in threes to their meals, in honour of the Trinity, and as the privileges of the Roman temples were so great, that those who sought refuge in them were secure, so those of the Cambrian sanctuary were equally great, for whoever sought safety in the church, was not only protected himself, but his family and property remained in the most perfect security, although he was at enmity with his sovereign. To their churches, wakes or anniversary feast-days were appointed in honour of the saints to whom they were dedicated. Their spirit of liberty and ardent *amor patriæ* was such, that after repeated losses in battle, they renewed the attack with redoubled vigour and equal valour; as Mr. Warrington observes, their spirit was the ani-

* Snowdon.

† In the Mirror, Vol. 13, P. 333, is an engraving of the horn, and for this description of it, see Camb. Quart. Mag. Vol. 1.

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mating spring of their genius, enabling them to sustain through a long succession of ages, the most striking reverses of fortune! They paid the strictest regard to religion, their religious instructors, and esteemed a pilgrimage to Rome most sacred. Like the Spartans, they were far more desirous of noble than splendid and rich marriages, so that even the lowest class carefully preserved their genealogy, and held pride of ancestry and nobility of family in high estimation. Nearly every house had its harp, and the influence of music over their minds was such, that they esteemed skill in playing on the harp beyond all kind of learning. They were of an acute and subtle genius, and excelled in rythmical songs and extemporary effusions, as regards invention or elegance of style; for these purposes Bards were appointed, who were deemed sacred, and possessed great influence over their countrymen.—They thought nothing elegantly spoken, without alliteration, with which they were extremely pleased. They were at times fond of festivity and mirth, and on such seasons were very facetious, often uttering humourous expressions. They were very anxious to preserve their teeth, and by constantly rubbing them with the leaves or bark of green hazel, made them appear like ivory. The laws of their Solon, Howell Dda considering the age they were instituted, cannot fail to attract admiration, for they had a principle of justice inherent in them, and

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would not disgrace more modern and now more enlightened nations and law-givers.

I have thus given a brief outline of their customs and manners, but for a more lengthy and particular account, I refer the lover of Welsh literature to Warrington's, Powell's, or Jones' Histories of Wales, and to Giraldus.

Character, Customs, &c, of the Modern Welsh.

As we have cursorily glanced at "by-gone days and by-gone friends," we shall now view the character and manners of the modern Cambrians.—They certainly are, as they are remarked to be, very hasty and irascible, (at least the generality of them, for there are exceptions to every rule,) but I think I may safely assert, that their anger soon subsides; they are fond of *cwrw da*, (good ale), and who is not? are vivacious, for they love laughter and wit; honest, for they deem it a crime to be in debt; brave, for we know they do not disgrace in this respect, their ancestors, for

"In their ashes, live their wonted fires;"

affable, kind, and hospitable, for "the milk of human kindness flows around their hearts," and instances often occur to prove it; for who is the stranger or outcast that ever met with an ill reception in Cambria? Cleanliness too, is a character

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for which they are particularly distinguished, and in some counties they have an adage, that "Cleanliness is next to Godliness." The lower class, in general, are fond of religious controversies, in which they take great delight, and the predominant tenets are Wesleyan and Calvinistic. Notwithstanding superstition in former days found so many adherers, I may venture to assert, that now, a ghost story would be regarded as "a tale told by an idiot," for superstition has

"——————— totter'd on her throne,
And hid her head in shades of gloomy night,"

so that it is now extremely difficult to extract from any of the peasants such a thing as a ghost or fairy tale.

A Welshman prides himself much on his snug little cottage and garden; they are sources of delight to him, and well may he be proud of his enjoyments,—who can look upon the white-washed cottage, adorned with roses, honey-suckles, or vines, and a neat little garden before it, which the peasant can call 'his own,' without exclaiming "how happy the possessor must be?" he is happy, and contentment seems to be stamped on the brows of all the inmates, and happiness written in legible characters on every feature; the sportive goats too, as they gambol with the innocent offspring of their owner, seem to partake of the general joy; and the silence which reigns, save now and then when some sweet feathered warbler pours his ebullitions of gratitude

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to his Maker, or "the chrystal streamlet's sighs" makes the scene tenfold interesting: and surely a monarch may envy the humble pleasures and enjoyments of a Cambrian peasant, for when "tis eve and done all labor," he cheerfully sits at his own cottage door reading his bible, ere he submits himself to repose, while

"—— with his harp old Lewellyn is seen,
And joins the gay party that sits on the green;
He leans on the door-way and plays them a tune,
And the children all dance by the light of the moon."

The numerous blessings which he enjoys, must naturally lead the cottager to love the divine author of them, and the contented state of mind which almost invariably reigns in *our* Switzerland, is probably the reason we so seldom, (to their credit be it said), hear of the Welsh labourer committing murder, or being guilty of crime.—The

"— blending of all beauties, streams and dells,
Fruit, foliage, crag, wood, corn-field, mountain, vine,
And chiefless castles breathing stern farewells
From gray but leafy walls, where ruin greenly dwells."

which renders Wales so interesting,* and of which it may be said, that

* Dr. Butler in his "Modern and Ancient Geography" says "A traveller through Wales, can hardly fail to remark the great similarity be-

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" Each lends to each a double charm,
Like pearls upon an Ethiop's arm,"

must contribute greatly to the enjoyments of the cottager, making him the happiest being in existence, and probably their contentment and freedom made the Welsh formerly so jealous of their liberty; and who would not fight while a single drop of the crimson fluid flowed in his veins, for such blessings as these?

Wales has ever been renowned for bards and poets, who it would appear contributed greatly to influence them with an enthusiasm for independence, for which, many suppose, the vaticide Edward caused them to be massacred; and much to their credit, my countrymen have established Eisteddvods, or annual musical meetings, for promoting the playing of the harp, and prizes are awarded to the best performers, who exert their utmost skill on the occasion.

Few people are so fond of encouraging the talents and good conduct of their countrymen, as the Welsh,*

tween Penmaenmawr, and Thermopylæ, and between Snowdon with its forked head and sacred spring, (Fynnon oer) and Parnassus;" and Blackwood speaking of Panoramic Beauties, continues, " The innumerable mountains of Wales, cloud crested, or clearly cutting with outlines free, flowing or fantastic, here the deep blue, there the dark purple, and yonder the bright crimson sky! Wales, glorious even were she without other glory, with Plinlimmon, Cader Idris, and Snowdon."

* Great praise is due to the very Rev. Archdeacon Beynon, for the great interest he has always manifested in promoting Welsh Literature.

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" In that generous cause, for ever strong,
The patriot's virtue and the poet's song,
Still as the tide of ages rolls away,
Shall charm the world unconscious of decay."

And they have another laudable annual meeting, styled Cymregyddion, for promoting Welsh Literature; annual prizes are given for the best Welsh Essays, on different subjects, to be written within a limited period. And who that understands the Welsh language, can call it harsh and dissonant? A talented correspondent of the Mirror, speaking of languages, says, " We shall find the Welsh tongue, on examination, to be in fact very poetic, and particularly capable of giving force and expression, whether of grandeur, of terror, or of melody, to the idea the words are intended to convey. Let the reader, who understands the Welsh pronunciation, judge whether the following distich is not an echo to, and as it were a picture, of the sense of the majestic sound of thunder :—

" Tan a dwr yn ymriaw,
Yw'r taranau dreigiau draw,"

The roaring thunder, dreadful in its ire,
Is water warring with aërial fire.

The next specimen will show the capability of the Welsh to express soft and melodious sounds :—

" Mae mil o leisiau meluson,
Mal mel o hyd ym mola hon."

The mellifluence of these lines, written on a harp, is totally lost in the translation :—

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Within the concave of its womb is found,
The magic scale of soul-enchanting sound."

Let the ridiculing Sais also remember, that 111 words of his language are also derived from the Welsh.

Nearly every traveller, of whatever nation he may have been, who has visited Wales, has confessed the beauty of Cambrian females: and to quote the words of Sir R. Phillips, "Why have our poets failed to colour and finish it,—more virtue never existed in their favourite shepherdesses than in Welsh and Shropshire girls! For beauty, symmetry, and complexion, they are not inferior to the nymphs of Arcadia, and they far outvie the pallid specimens of Circassia!"*

The greater portion of females in the Principality, are extremely well skilled in horsemanship, and many would not cut a bad figure in Ryan's or Astley's troop; for frequently do the farming nymphs ride without saddle or bridle, and even on the canter! On a market day, the numbers, seated on their dobbins, with their best caps and beaver hats, their Sunday flannel jackets and petticoats, and their ruddy cheerful countenances, form an interesting appearance, and illustrate the neatness and happiness which prevails amongst them.—We will now take a peep at the most popular customs,

* Blackwood says, "The Welsh are celebrated for their Lullaby songs, and a good Welsh nurse, with a pleasing voice, has been found more soporific in the nursery, than the midwife's anodyne."

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which remain as shadows of our ancestors, and we shall discover in some of them relics of the "good old ways" of those, who are now sleeping in "that dreamless bed," in which it will one day be our lot to sleep.

*Welsh Marriages.**

"The wedding day,—aye what'n a merry sight,
Sich doings ye may not see every where."

WESTMORELAND POET.

A very peculiar and interesting custom of Wales, is that of marriage among the lower class; a most laudable one too, and worthy of imitation by surrounding nations; and it appears to me a matter of no small surprise that it has not been adopted by so economical a people as the English. When a young couple intend offering themselves at the Temple of Hymen, if they are very poor and short of that most necessary article of life "*pecunia*," they generally send a man styled the Bidder, round to their acquaintances and friends, who invite them, sometimes in rhyme, to the wedding,—but if they can afford it, they issue circulars: the following is a copy of one:—

* This account, with those of All Hallow E'en, Emblem of Wales, & Welsh Burials, were sent by me and inserted in the Mirror; and looking over a volume of the Olio the other day, I perceived that a plagiarist, signing himself N.N. has copied my account of the latter, verbatim.

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June 27, 1827.

"As we intend to enter the matrimonial state on Thursday, the 17th day of July next, we are encouraged by our friends to make a bidding on the occasion, the same day, at the Butcher's Arms, Carmarthen, when and where the favour of your good and agreeable company is humbly solicited; and whatever donation you may be pleased to confer on us then, will be thankfully received, warmly acknowledged, and cheerfully repaid whenever called for, on a similar occasion,

By your most obedient servants,

JOHN JONES,

MARY EVANS."

The persons so invited (if they accept the invitation) generally form part of the procession to church, and in *some parts* are preceded by a harper or fiddler, whilst the relatives of both bride and bridegroom are decorated with favours. On their road to the *sanctum sanctorum*, some cunning lass who slily awaits their approach, will endeavour to throw a garland over the bride, which if it falls on her is deemed lucky, but if it does not,—unfortunate.—After the nuptial knot is tied, they veer their course to the public house mentioned in the bills, where they partake, not of a sumptuous banquet, but of the simple though not the worst fare, of "bread and cheese and kisses," at the expence of the new-married folks. After this, a large plate is placed on the table in the room, and they proceed to receive the

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money which each person may be disposed to give, whilst one keeps an account of the sum and names. They frequently receive £50, and sometimes, though seldom, £100; and they have also the privilege, (by paying the duty) of selling the ale to the persons assembled. It is to be observed, that the money so deposited cannot be reclaimed by the persons who gave it, until a similar occasion presents itself in their family. By this means the new-married folks are enabled to procure furniture and other articles requisite for them, or to put out the same in business. As to the courting in bed, similar to the Dutch custom called *queesting*, which seems to be a subject of ridicule with the English, on the indelicacy of their neighbours, I must confess that such a custom once existed in "days that are fled," but it has become obsolete; and a mistaken notion seems to be entertained respecting it, for be it told they never went to bed without their clothes on such occasions, and all due regard was paid to decency, so that they were not so culpable as some imagine.

Welsh Burials.

The Burials amongst the peasantry are another curious custom. In many parts of the Principality, the night before the body is consigned to its last habitation, which is called *Gwil nos*, or watch night,

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the friends and neighbours of the deceased bring each a candle, and assemble in the room with the corpse, where they burn the candles, placing two or three upon pewter plates on the body. They then sit up in the room all night, and usually pass the time in singing and prayer. If the relatives of the deceased are poor, the persons assembled generally bring with them a present. I am informed, that the candles are purposely made black, and have appropriate inscriptions on them.*

Cambrian Churchyards.

" No hogs are there with snout obscene,
Nor grazing cattle mar the green;
Nor nettles high, rank grass or dock,
Nor human bones to shame and shock;
But flowers fair their fragrance shed,
And every grave's a flower bed!
With primrose borders, daisies, lilies,
Uprooted from the dewy valleys;
And laved with lime, so fair to sight,
The head and foot stone's e'r are white."

LLEWELLYN.

The Cambrian Churchyard presents a degree of neatness, simplicity, and floral decoration, that must charm the eye of every beholder, and produce to the traveller the most interesting appearance.—

* " In many parts of Britain, a platter of salt was placed on the corpse with candles about it." Anderson's Prize Essay on the State of Society and Knowledge in the Highlands.

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No pompous stone, or gilded epitaph, denotes the departure of the cottager; but, a few blooming flowers adorning the simple grave, denote that the inmates are blooming in Paradise;—here, the pledges, the simple, yet feeling tributes of affection, are seen waving over the remains of the dead; and the sweet, delightful fragrance of flowers salutes you, indeed the whole has more the aspect of a garden than a churchyard, yet has an innocent and humble appearance; and surely the eye of Heaven must look down with pleasure upon such an affectionate and endearing custom, which serves to keep them in remembrance when the dead are changed to dust.

On Palm Sunday, or Easter Day, in other parts of Wales, where no flowers are set, they proceed early in the morning to clean and whitewash the gravestones, take away weeds, and strew these simple tributes over the graves,—which is also done weekly by some affectionate individuals. This custom seems to have been derived from the Romans, as *they* strewed flowers on the bodies and graves of the departed. Ovid has the following lines, translated by Kennet:—

"Tombs have their honours too, our parents crave
Some slender present to adorn the grave,
Slender the presents which the ghosts we owe,
Those powers observe not what we give, but how—

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They only ask a tile with garlands crown'd,
And fruit and salt to scatter on the ground."

and Anchises, according to Virgil, says,

" Full canisters of fragrant lilies bring,
Mix'd with the purple roses of the spring;
Let me with funeral flowers his body strew."

It was also customary among the Greeks to adorn their graves with flowers and parsley; thus the daughter of Agamemnon says,

" No sooner came I to my father's tomb,
But milk fresh pour'd in copious streams did flow,
And flowers of ev'ry sort around were strew'd."

The Romans and Greeks were also very particular respecting this custom, and in their wills ordered their graves to be strewed with roses and flowers.—The Spaniards too, and many other nations, strewed them on the grave.

Amusements.

Giraldus relates, that the amusements of the ancient Britons were, pitching an iron bar, throwing a sledge, a large stone or quoits, running, leaping, swimming, archery, throwing the javelin, fencing, and playing the quarter staff. There were also diversions considered rural, and as less manly, such as hunting, fishing, and bird catching; besides those

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practised in families, as private diversions, and considered as literary,—these were poetry, playing on the harp, reading, singing an ode of four parts and accenting it with proper expression; heraldry, embassy, and others of a more sedate kind, as chess, draughts, backgammon, dice, &c. Besides these, there were modes of hunting thus distinguished,—hunting the stag, pursuing a swarm of bees, and taking salmon,—were deemed common diversions; hunting the bear, squirrel, and cock of the wood; barking diversions; and hunting the fox, hare, and roe buck, clamorous ones. They had laws and rules respecting each, to which they paid the utmost regard. They had also the quintain, a sport calculated to try their activity and skill of horsemanship and the sword; it consisted of an upright piece of wood, affixed to the top of which was a cross-piece that turned round, one end was broad and the other had a bag of sand or some weight attached to it,—on the vacant end being touched, it turned round with great velocity: those who engaged were always on horseback, and when they hit it were obliged to be extremely agile, or the quintain would turn and give them a blow. This was much practised at marriages, and was introduced to Britain by the Romans; it is also practised here and there in England now.

Playing at football is and was a very popular custom amongst the Cambrians, in which game they

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exerted themselves, at times, even to the loss of a limb. Two parishes often engaged on a fixed day, generally New Year's Day or Easter; each side endeavoured to kick the ball over the boundary, to the other parish; and spared neither legs nor chins that stood in the way of the out-stretched legs, and that party which succeeded in kicking the ball to the other, had the no small honour of being esteemed for that year, as superior to the other. This football playing frequently led to petty wars, and seldom terminated without bloodshed.

The amusements of the modern Welsh are, throwing the bar, (a trial of strength) quoits, leaping, riding, fives, (of which they are particularly fond) music, dancing, and all English games.

All Hallow E'en.

"Ne'er be I found by thee unawed,
On that thrice hallow'd eve abroad,
When goblins haunt from flood to fen
The steps of men."
COLLINS'S ODE TO FEAR.

On this eve, called by the Welsh *Nos galan giaf*, as I before observed, the credulous go to hear and see goblins, but those who are not so fond of those unearthly beings, remain at home to enjoy the "flowing bowl," and burn nuts to ascertain who shall die; the less superstitious commemorate

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this eve by apple biting, diving, &c. as the English do St. Clements;* but the *chef d'œuvre* is, they have a vessel styled the puzzling jug to increase the hilarity, out of which each person is compelled to drink. From the brim, extending about an inch below the surface, it has holes fantastically arranged, so as to appear like ornamental work, and which are not perceived, except by the perspicacious; three projections of the size and shape of marbles are around the brim, having a hole of the size of a pea in each; these communicate with the bottom of the jug through the handle, which is hollow, and has a small hole at the top, which with two of the holes being stopped by the fingers, and the mouth applied to the one nearest the handle, enables one to suck the contents with ease; but this trick is unknown to every one, and consequently a stranger generally makes some mistake, perhaps applying his mouth as he would to another jug, in which case the contents, (generally ale) issue through the fissures on his person, to the no small diversion of the spectators.

* This eve is celebrated in the north of England, as well as among the Scotch, who deemed it hallowed.—See Burns' "All Hallow E'en."

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The Emblem of Wales.

" Cymry dewrion, medd y bardd,
Gwisgwn heddyw genin hardd,
Cenin gwyrddaf yn yr ardd
Ar wyl Dewi Sant."

IOAN TEGID.

" March various, fierce and wild, with wind-crack'd cheeks,
By wilder Welshmen led, and crown'd with leeks."

CHURCHILL.

Owen, in his Cambrian Biography says, " The wearing of the leek on St. David's day probably originated from the custom of *Cymortha*, or the neighbourly aid practised among farmers, which is of various kinds. In some districts of South Wales, all the neighbours of a small farmer without means, appoint a day, when they attend to plough his land, or assist in other offices; and at such a time, it is a custom for each individual to bring his portion of leeks, to be used in making pottage for the company." In the Royal Apopthegms of King James I, we find the following, " The Welshmen, in commemoration of the great fight by the Black Prince of Wales, do wear leeks as their chosen ensign."— Shakespeare, in his play of Henry V., mentions the leek as being worn by Fluellen, who makes Pistol eat the one he wore, because he had ridiculed it; and he also says, " The Welshmen did good service where leeks did grow, wearing them in their Mon-

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mouth caps."* Many other accounts are given of the origin of wearing the leek, and according to Mr. Llewellyn, the manner in which it became the national emblem was thus:—As a prince of Wales was returning victorious from battle, he wished to have some leaf or flower to commemorate the event, but it being Winter, no plant or shrub was seen until they came to the Wye, when they beheld the Sive, which he commanded to be worn as a memorial of the victory. Mr. L. says he has been confidently assured that the leek, as is generally supposed, is not the original emblem, but the sive or chive, and adduces the above as the occasion of its being worn. It partakes of the smell and taste of the leek, but it is not so noxious and is much handsomer. It is common to almost every peasant's garden, and grows infinitely larger than when planted, in a wild state on the banks of the Wye.—The following is the ridiculous legend of the English respecting it:—The Welsh, in olden days, were so infested by Ourang Outangs, that they could obtain no peace, day or night, and not being themselves able to extirpate them, they invited the English to assist, who came; but through mistake killed

* In the Haerlaem M. S. 1977, Fol. 9, are the following lines:—

"I like the Leeke above all herbes and flowers,
When first we wore the same, the field was ours:
The Leeke is white and greên, whereby is meant,
That Britaines are both stout and eminent:
Next to the Lion and the Unicorn,
The Leeke, the fairest emblyn that is worne."

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several of the Welsh, so that in order to distinguish them from the monkeys, they desired them to stick a leek in their hats.

May Day.

"Beautiful and radiant May,
Is not this thy festal day."

L. E. L.

They had a custom in Carmarthenshire on this eve, of placing branches of the mountain ash, (called in Welsh *Cerdyn*) over the doors of their houses, as it was supposed to be a specific against the witches, and would deter them from entering.—They also celebrate this day with festivity and dancing round the may-pole, to the silvery tones of the harp. The Romans decorated their houses with branches of trees and flowers on this day, and devoted it to pleasure, and many Cambrian customs seem to have had their derivation from them.

Riding the Wooden Horse.

A no less ludicrous than laudable custom, of Saxon origin, prevailed in Wales, styled as above; in Cumberland and Scotland called Stanging; and in Dorsetshire Skimmington riding. When a man was known to be under gynecocracy, or a shrew

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was reported to have belaboured her spiritless partner, several wanton folks procured a long pole, over which they set a person astride, whom they carried round the village or town, and then stopped at the door of the vixen, when one of them repeated some doggrel lines, of his own composition, on the subject; after which a loud shout, or expression of indignation would salute the mortified inmates, and unless they presented them with a trifle, they would continue there for a considerable time; but this custom has now become vice versa, as it is only done when a husband ill uses his better part.—This ceremony also, with the addition of a pair of horns worn by the rider, was performed when a husband was found to be a cuckold.

Beating Burgesses.

They have a censurable practice in Carmarthen, of taking advantage of the *interregnum* which ensues, between the exit of the old mayor and the swearing in of the new one, which does not occur till about two or three hours has elapsed; during which time the *mobility*, who imagine that no law exists during that period, assemble near the town-hall with pocket handkerchiefs, to the end of which they affix a hard knot, and should any unfortunate burgess chance to pass by, they belabour his back most unmercifully with their weapons; they are no

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respecters of persons, and I recollect witnessing them, with feelings of indignation, beat a nobleman, who with a respectable person of the town inadvertently passed by, and who had he been a Cambrian would not have borne the insolence with such good humour: this was about ten years ago, so that by this time I hope this practice has become obsolete.

Wassailing.

"Wassail, Wassail! all over the town,
Our toast is white, our ale is brown."

WASSAILER'S SONG.

This jovial custom tends to show the conviviality and love of mirth, which prevailed amongst our ancestors, at a period when they were less refined, but not perhaps less happy than the more polished generations which have succeeded them, and in taking a retrospect of them, it is pleasing to observe the hilarity, happiness and sociability, which existed amongst them; for although their mirth was somewhat boisterous, we must consider the period they lived in; they were none of your dandy, buckrammed and effemminate coxcombs, who shrinked aghast at the fare of bread and cheese and ale; no, they preferred that and the delicious mutton of their country, to any luxuries; and seated around their wide and huge tables, with their simple fare and their mead or ale, while the bard struck his "tuneful

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lyre," they were contented, and in their element; and this festive revelry (if it may so be called) they valued far more than the ephemeral pleasures of more refined nations, at that period. What a sorry figure would a modern buck, accustomed to rich sauces, soups, fricasees, and wine, have cut amongst this blunt and jovial race!—Though they are of course more civilized and refined than their rude forefathers, yet the same brave, hospitable, and gay spirit dwells within the present race,—and may it never cease.

It is on twelfth night that wassailing is customary, and more in Merionethshire and other counties in the North, than in those of the South. Seated round a huge oaken table, with the yuletide log blazing on the fire, and the wassail bowl, with its contents, (generally sugared ale, toast, &c. and sometimes enriched with *eau de vie*) sparkling, the large sirloin of beef or *gigot* smoking on the board, the old harper increasing the mirth with the melodious strains of his harp, and "the joke and jest going round," seem an echo of past ages and past enjoyments. This festivity is continued during the greatest part of the night.

They have wassailing also, (similar to housewarming in England): after a person enters a new house, his neighbours proceed with cakes, fruit, and a bowl of wassail, which they present to the new tenant, but before entering, one of them repeats

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some poetical lines on the subject, after which they proceed to enjoy the contents,

" 'Till care in mirth and noise is drown'd."

The wassail bowl is of Saxon origin, for when Vortigern, prince of the Silures, fell in love with Rowena, the niece of Hengist the Saxon, she presented him with a bowl of spiced wine, addressing him thus in Saxon, " *Waes Heal, Hlaford Cyning,*" implying, " Be of health, Lord King." Prince Vortigern after this married her, and thus his kingdom was ceded to the Saxons. Since that period, Waesheil became the name of the drinking cups of the Anglo-Saxons, which were constantly used at public entertainments and convivial meetings. The wasseil bowl, says Warton, is the same as Shakespeare's gossip's bowl, mentioned in the Midsummer Night's Dream. This custom was very much practised in different parts of England, particularly in Cornwall and Yorkshire, on Christmas eve.

Christmas Customs.

It is a custom in Carmarthen, on Christmas eve, or as it is styled *a le gallois*, " *Nos y polgen,*" to carry torches about the streets, and on Christmas morning to proceed early to Church, (where service is performed) with small green candles burning, made for the occasion. This custom seems to have originated with the Romans; the lighting up

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of houses too, formed a part of the ceremonies of the Teutonic god Thor, at Iuultide. Brand also says, " on the night of this eve our ancestors were wont to light candles of an enormous size, called Christmas Candles." These must have been rather more pleasant for one to see than Corpse Candles.

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FUGITIVE PIECES.

" ——— Sunt quædam mediocria sunt mala plura."--MARTIAL.

ON THE SEVI, THE EMBLEM OF WALES.

EMBLEM of Cymru,---the days long since have been,
And hid in oblivion's dark grave,
When thou on the warrior's gilt helmet wast seen,
In battle and glory to wave.
How oft has the fair one sat on the lone tower,
To watch for her lover returning with thee,
Whom her fair hand had plac'd on his helm in the bower,
Preferring the Sevi to garland or flower,---
How happy that warrior must be!

How oft has she sigh'd when eve's gentle breath,
Wafted silently over her leek,
But she knew not his eyes were fast closed in death,---
That pale as the moon was his cheek.

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Go tell, that her lover, her fond one, is slain,
Yet grasping the pledge of his love;
Go tell her his helmet lies low on the plain,
That the dew's on his brow---but she'll meet him again,
For he LIVES with the angels above.---
* * * * * * * * * * *

Yes, delight of my fathers! the castle and hall,
And the banner that floated on high;
And the silv'ry-toned harp at the festival,
Were adorned with the Sive of the Wye.
Tho' now thou'rt unknown on the standard of war,
And unseen in the fair's silken vest,
Yet still thou'rt esteem'd the true Cambrian star,---
Long mayest thou shine,---be seen from afar,
And treasur'd in every Welsh breast.

ON PICTON'S MONUMENT.

GRAND pile! thou tell'st of days gone by,
Of scenes that once have been,
And Picton's deeds shall never lie
In Lethe, while thou'rt seen.
For to posterity thou'lt hand his name,---
A name exalted in the list of fame.

Valour's reward is seen in thee,
And merit claims the prize;
Yet gazing on, thee Memory
O'er Picton often sighs;
And musing with the pearl-drop in her eye,
"Alas!" she cries, "such patriots should not die."

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E'en Victory o'er the hero wept,
When carnage shewed the dead,
And pointed where the brave one slept,
Who for his country bled:
Yet smiled that ages yet unborn would see,
In thee how Britons fought for Liberty.

Though Picton sleeps in English ground,
And we have not his grave;
Yet his mausoleum will be found
In the bosoms of the brave;
And thou, his noble pillar, wilt inspire,
Succeeding warriors, with like martial fire.

STANZAS.

Fond thoughts of thee, fond thoughts of thee,
Come floating to my mind,
Like fragments wafted forcibly
To shore by wave and wind.

And phantasies will oft arise,
Crossing my fever'd brain;
But, ah! they only tantalize,
And sink to nought again.

For like some pictures sweet they seem,---
The real scenes they're not,
They quickly pass like some fond dream
That is not soon forgot.---

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Thou'rt gone away and now am I
Like some dull cloudy night,
Without the zephyr's gentle sigh,
Or Cynthia's silv'ry light.

Yet tho' thou'rt gone, I think of thee,
For ne'er can I forget
Thy features---so expressively
Upon my mind they're set.

The captive may forget the day
Of his long-wish'd release,---
The sun neglect his ancient way,
The breast ne'er think of peace:

The dove forget her absent mate,---
To ebb and flow the sea;
The tyrant cease to scowl and hate,
Yet I'll remember thee.

THE OLD HARPER.

O HAD you heard him strike his lyre,
You never had forgot
The silv'ry strains, for time could ne'er
The recollection blot.

They came upon my list'ning ear,
Like sounds from angels' strings;
For freedom fir'd his aged breast,
As he sang of by-gone things.

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But that sweet harp is silent now,
Aye, many a day agone:
And chill that hand and furrow'd brow,
As marble or cold stone.

But, ah! I hope to hear him play
Again a sweeter song:
Fir'd with heavenly joy and love
Angelic hosts among.

MAY FLOWERS.

Ye gems of earth, ye plumes of May!
That scent the ambient air,
Like us the creatures of a day,
To-day in blossom rich and gay,
But gone to-morrow---where?

Ye now bask in the sunny beam,
Fann'd by the southern air,
But ye will pass---a transient dream,
And when I look again I deem
You will not then be there.

For wind and rain will sweep o'er ye,
When a few months pass by,---
How plainly one may read and see,
In flow'rs, men's life and history:---
Like them we live and die.

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Swept from the earth by time's simoom,
And hid from ev'ry eye,
When I lie in the silent tomb,
Ye flowers will live again and bloom,---
Ah, wherefore should not I?

O! may we try to live below,
As spotless as a flow'r;
Then at the final spring we'll grow,
Water'd by streams of bliss, and O!
Bedeck the Heavenly bower.

THE SUMMONS.

SAY heard ye not the clarion's sound,---
Its echoes in the vale,
And saw ye not the cresset mound,
Or warrior in his mail?
For I have heard the thrilling blast,
And seen the crested heads go past.

The father leaves his peaceful home,
The son his mother's cot,
The chief has left his lofty dome,
The soldier meets his lot,
But as the Spartan host were slain,---
So they will ne'er return again.

Behold a thousand armed and strong,
Rear their proud heads on high,
Like a waving wood, but ah! ere long

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Those red plumes low will lie---
Those helmets bright will gather rust,
When their wearers now--- are chang'd to dust.

Each sight and sound seems to declare,
Th' approaching bloody fray,
And ev'ry look bids us prepare,
And to the field away;
Haste, let us arm and be our cry
" A soldier's death or victory."

But if the sound and sight cause fear,
Of the approaching foe,
What will it cause when we shall hear
Th' archangel's trumpet blow.
Each leaf and flower that fades---each day---
Teach us that we must pass away.

The feral plumes that mournfully
On Death's dark carriage wave, ;---
All sublunary things we see,
Remind us of the grave.
The argent orbs---the trackless sea
Are symbols of eternity.

Parents and children leave this earth,
At algid death's command,
Each peasant, and each man of worth,
Leave for another land,
Let us prepare then be our cry,
" A christian's death and victory."

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THE BANQUET.

Haste, warriors, to your chieftain's call,
For ye have won the fight,
The lamps are shining in the hall,
Like stars on some clear night,
The festive board groans with the fare,
And beaming eyes and looks are there.

Then come ye faithful ones and brave,
While vict'ry sheds her ray,
The streamers deck'd with laurel wave,
The minstrels sweetly play,
And make the castle hall to ring
With Io Pean's which they sing.

The graces wait your brows to deck,
With valour's chaplet green,
For Vict'ry shows the dismal wreck
Of foes that once have been.
And smiling takes the list of fame,
Enrolling each brave hero's name.

But when the Christian's fight is won,
A richer feast than this
Will he enjoy (when worlds are done)
In everlasting bliss.
Then with the angels will he sing,
And praise on golden harps his King.

Aye, when the stars afford no light,
When sun and moon are dim,
He will be shining ever bright

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With glorious beams from Him,
Who is the King and chief of all,---
Before whom Angels prostrate fall.

There, with the cherubims he'll shine,
Nor think of what has been,
But drink of pleasure (not of wine)
While Jesus crowns the scene.
And by the Seraphs he will be
Deck'd with Immortality.

THEY CANNOT STAY.

"THERE is a tongue in ev'ry leaf,
A voice in ev'ry rill,
A voice that speaketh ev'ry where,
In flood and fire---through earth and air,
A tongue that's never still."

The leaves borne by the bitter blast,
And scatter'd in our way,
Tell us their life is quickly past,
And that they cannot stay;
For soon as winter cometh on,
We look for them, but they are gone.

The hollow winds that moaning sweep
Along with boundless sway,---
And foaming waves that never sleep,
Repeat, they cannot stay:
Onward they move nor ever wait
For man, who cannot check their rate.

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The glittering stars, the mouldering stone,
Old time that flies each day,
And fleeting clouds in silent tone,
Say that they cannot stay:
Stars, time, and clouds, keep moving still,
And till eternity they will.

The fire, the sea, the earth, the air,
All things o'er which we sway,
And all of earth, or foul or fair,
Declare they cannot stay:
Their progress man cannot arrest,
For they will heed not his behest.

Death's daily power---compulsive call,---
The stones o'er human clay,
Tell, reader, you and I, aye, all,
That we too cannot stay:
For go we soon or later must,
And mingle our foul dust with dust.

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ERRATA.

Page 23, Line 14, for *Lywell* read *Llewel.*
8, for *strikes* read *struck.*
26, 24, for *he was answered* read *he answered.*
30, 5, for *he vanished* read *vanished.*
31, 11, for *which are right* read *who, &c.*
56, 4, for *are a sort of processions* read *are processions.*
8, for *these kind of funerals* read *funerals of this kind.*
62, 7, for *and that she observed* read *and observed.*
114, 9, for *stores* read *shoes.*

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